Dr Macnoodie.

1810

Given out at Demira by Lord Rudville
October 7th 1810.

REVIEW, &c.

It is requested that this work be not left open to common inspection as tho' printed to facilitate perusal it is neither published nor intended for publication —

/ John Brown's hand writing /

REVIEW

OF THE

EVENTS AND TREATIES

WHICH ESTABLISHED THE

BALANCE OF POWER

IN EUROPE,

AND THE

BALANCE OF TRADE

IN FAVOR OF

GREAT BRITAIN.

1796.

By John Bruce Esqr

INTRODUCTION.

CONTENTS.

The Maintenance of the Independency of the European Nations the Source of the preſent War—The Proceedings of France were ſubverſive of this eſtabliſhed Principle of the Law of Nations—Cauſes of the Succeſs of France—Effects of it—Decline of both—Arrangement of the Evidence reſpecting the Balance of Power and of Trade.

IN the preſent criſis of Europe it is of importance to trace the exiſting War to its true ſource.—On the part of France, hoſtilities were avowedly commenced, for the conqueſt of the Netherlands; on the part of Great Britain and its Allies, for the maintenance of that ſyſtem of European policy, upon which independent ſtates had acted for ages, and upon which the return of Peace can alone be deemed ſafe and permanent.

Information upon this ſubject is the more neceſſary, at this juncture, becauſe this ſyſtem ſeems either to have been overlooked or loſt ſight

of, in an impatience for the reſtoration of that tranquillity which all equally deſire, but which thoſe who love their country can only aſſent to, upon terms conſiſtent with the juſt rights of independent nations; and which Great Britain, in particular, can only look forward to, provided it can be obtained with ſafety to its conſtitution and ſecurity to its reſources.

That the French nation, at the fall of the Monarchy and the introduction of the Levelling and Revolutionary Syſtem, avowed its plan of univerſal conqueſt is no longer a ſubject of diſpute. Its aggrandizement was to be effected, partly by its armies, and partly by inſtilling its ruinous principles into the minds of the induſtrious orders of the people, to excite them to rebellion, in all the countries againſt which it had commenced or meditated hoſtilities.

The ſucceſs of France may be referred to the following cauſes;

To the immenſe reſources, which it created by the emiſſion of paper currency, or giving to aſſignats a fictitious value, without any real property or fund to ſupport their circulation, yet compelling the acceptance of them, under pain of death;

To

To a general ſeizure and pillage of the public and private property in France itſelf, and in the countries which have been plundered by its armies;

To the ſyſtem of terror, which forced every man capable of bearing arms, not only in France, but in the countries which have ſubmitted to the French arms, to ſerve as a common ſoldier.

The effects of theſe cauſes have been as calamitous, as the cauſes were new and diſaſtrous;

The regular reſources of no eſtabliſhed government could keep pace with the reſources of a country, which conſiſted of the whole of its accumulated wealth ſeized, laid out and laviſhed, as the ambition and avarice of the uſurpers might chuſe;

The circulating paper currency of no country, which depended on credit ariſing from the conviction of its being the repreſentative of real value, could keep pace with the nominal aſſignats, which the people were to accept for real value, under pain of death; and this compulſion extending, not only over France itſelf, but over the conquered countries;

The regular armies of no country, in which agriculture, arts and commerce were to be protected, could bear a proportion, in point of numbers, to the armies of France, compoſed of the maſs of the male inhabitants of the moſt populous country in Europe and of the ſubjugated countries, more particularly when the ſervices of theſe numbers were to be forced, and victory purchaſed by ſacrificing as many thouſands of French, as compoſed the regular armies of their opponents

The ſyſtem of terror, ingrafted upon the firſt enthuſiaſm of the French armies, for a liberty which they did not comprehend, placed their legions in a ſituation, where the executioner was to drive on to action when enthuſiaſm might ceaſe.

Theſe cauſes and theſe effects, from the nature of them, could continue only, while the nominal reſources and the ſyſtem of terror continued; but it was difficult for any political wiſdom to calculate the period of the experiment, though it might foreſee the certainty of the reſult; hence the ſeceſſions of Pruſſia, of ſeveral of the German and of the Italian Princes

and

and of Spain, from the Powers who had confederated to preſerve the independence of the nations of Europe, againſt this ebullition of revolutionary frenzy and of forced reſources.

At length the evil appears to have wrought itſelf out. The forced reſources of France have reached an approaching bankruptcy, and the war againſt civilized nations begins to promiſe them a favorable iſſue; for neither can the numerous hoſts which the executioner had driven into the field be longer effectually recruited by requiſitions, nor the ſyſtem of terror be longer veiled by licentiouſneſs. Happy will it be for France, and happy for Europe, if the ſtings of conſcious atrocities be all that remain; happier ſtill, if the example of ſedition leading to rebellion and to the murder of good men, ſhall teach ſurrounding nations to preſerve their civilization, and to ſee that the bleſſings of peace depend on the maintenance of the regular government and laws, which prevent the multitude from committing wrongs or crimes.

With the object of bringing forward the evidence, upon which the terms of peace can proceed with ſafety and honor,

We

We ſhall take a comparative view of the preſent Belligerent Powers, viz. France with the Netherlands (Auſtrian and Dutch), on the one hand, and Britain, Auſtria and Sardinia, on the other, in reſpect of territory, military and naval ſtrength and reſources; connecting with this compariſon, the naval aid which Ruſſia has furniſhed, and the military contingent ſtipulated by treaty.

We ſhall review the treaties in ſucceſſion, which have been formed to create and maintain the balance of power in Europe, drawing from each period of theſe treaties, the inferences which they authorize, and illuſtrating them by hiſtorical proofs.

We ſhall review the commercial treaties which have been formed, in connection with the political, as they have eſtabliſhed the commerce of Great-Britain with the Netherlands, and have thrown the balance of trade in its favor.

We ſhall examine the political effects, which neceſſarily would reſult from the former balance of power in Europe being deſtroyed; and offer ſome conjectures, reſpecting the political effects which would follow, from another balance of power being eſtabliſhed analogous to it.

We

We ſhall examine the commercial effects to Europe, and in a particular manner to Britain, ſuppoſing the preſent conqueſts of France to be annexed to it, under any practicable form of government, compared with the commercial effects, ſuppoſing either the former balance of trade with the Netherlands, in favour of Britain, to be reſtored, or in the preſent ſtate of Europe a general peace to take place.

PART I.

Comparative view of the Belligerent Powers, viz. France, with the Netherlands (Auſtrian and Dutch) on the one hand, and Britain, Auſtria and Sardinia, on the other; in reſpect of Territory, Military and Naval Strength, and Reſources.

CONTENTS.

Extent of the Dominions, Coaſts, and Conqueſts of France, ſuppoſing theſe Conqueſts annexed to it——Compared with the Dominions, Coaſts. &c. of the Belligerent Powers—Extent of the Military and Naval Power of France upon the ſame ſuppoſition—Compared with thoſe of Great Britain and its Allies—Extent of the Reſources of France upon the like ſuppoſition—Three diſtinct Aſpects of them,—Compariſon of them with the Reſources of Great Britain and its Allies—Reſults.

IN a ſurvey of the dominions of France, we muſt include not only the territory of the mo-

narchy, before the opening of the war, but the acceſſions of country which the armies of the Republic, at the preſent juncture, command.

The French monarchy extended from the Pyrenees to the frontier of the Auſtrian Netherlands, and winding round, by the borders of Liege, took in Loraine and Alſace, then ſtretched upwards, towards Savoy and Switzerland.

The conqueſts of the Republic have added to it part of Piedmont and Nice, on the ſide of Italy; the diſtricts on the French ſide of the Rhine; the territories of ſeveral of the German Princes, and free towns on the Lower Rhine, viz. Liege, Treves, Cologne and Aix-la-Chapelle, and the whole of the Seventeen Provinces of the Netherlands which formerly were ſubjected partly to Auſtria, and partly to the States General; nor ought it to be omitted, that by the late treaty with Spain, that kingdom has become, in a greater degree than by the Family Compact, annexed to France.

1. With this immenſe and connected territory, France poſſeſſes a coaſt extending from the Pyrenees to the Zuyder Zee, with the command of the rivers in the Low Countries, and

of

of the ſea ports of the Dutch, by which it may eſtabliſh a trade and a marine in the Narrow Seas,* and obſtruct the navigation of the rivers which lead into the interior of Germany; while, at the ſame time, it has on the Mediterranean, not only its own ancient coaſts and ports, but a conſiderable extent of the coaſt on the borders of Italy; and ſince the late treaty with Spain, acceſs to, and the controul, if not the command, of the coaſts of that kingdom.

If we compare the territory of Britain, Auſtria, and Sardinia, with this extent of the French dominions in Europe, we find, that the extent of the Britiſh Iſles bears no proportion even to that of the fallen monarchy; and that the little territories of Sardinia are rather what muſt be protected than what can afford aſſiſtance. The German and more remote dominions of Auſtria, if they bear a nearer proportion to the former kingdom of France, are ſeparated into diſtant portions.

The coaſts of Britain and Ireland alone are to furniſh the navy, which, with the contingent of

* The term "Narrow Seas" is retained, becauſe it occurs in all the Treaties, but in the annexed ſketch, theſe ſeas are diſtinguiſhed by the name now in uſe, viz. "North Seas."

Ruſſia, will have to oppoſe the marine of France, iſſuing from almoſt all the coaſts of Europe, from Gibraltar to the North Sea; and in the Mediterranean, Britain can derive but an inconſiderable naval aſſiſtance from Sardinia and Naples.

But ſuppoſing the territory of the Belligerent Powers to be in extent equal to that of France, the parts of the former are unconnected, while thoſe of the latter are connected; the former therefore are expoſed to the perpetual attacks which may be made by an enemy commanding concentrated dominions, in the moſt fertile and moſt populous region of Europe.

The contingent which Ruſſia is to furniſh by the late treaties, can only be held as a preſent aid; the naval force, which ſhe has ſent to protect the Narrow Seas, proves only the juſt alarm which the Empreſs has taken at the naval power of the Dutch having become an acceſſory to that of France, and of conſequence in any future war, that France would be in a ſituation to oppoſe, with the aſſiſtance of Denmark and Sweden, her riſing marine, if not to cruſh it, even in the Baltic.

2. We have next to make a compariſon of the ſtrength (military and naval) of the Belligerent Powers, ſuppoſing France to retain her conqueſts, and

and the Allies to be called out, at a future period, for their common defence.

France, during the Monarchy, was ſuppoſed to contain twenty five millions* of inhabitants, the Auſtrian Netherlands, 1,880,000, the Seven Provinces, about two millions.† It is difficult to make any computation of the inhabitants of thoſe diſtricts, on the ſide of Italy, or on the banks of the Rhine, which the Republic has formed into departments, or now commands as dependencies, but it would be a low calculation to take them at one million. Suppoſing then the revolutionary ſyſtem of the French republic to be at an end, and that France was to retain the countries which have been enumerated, and ſuppoſing alſo, that civilization and the arts of peace were to be reſtored, France alone, excluſive of Spain (if we admit one-twentieth part of its inhabitants to be muſtered in its armies and marine) would poſſeſs a force conſiſting of 1,494,000; if two thirds of this number ſhall be allotted to its armies, and one-third to its marine, the armies of Germany, ſuppoſing the whole of that diſjointed empire to act in concert, would be out-

* M. Necker, chap. 9. makes the average 24,802,580.
† Zimmerman's Statiſtics.

num-

numbered; but, if thoſe of Auſtria only, which have been computed at 250,000 men, aſſiſted by thoſe of Sardinia, about 30,000, were to act, the force would not bear any proportion, in point of numbers, to that of France; hence, with reſources to ſupport them, the French armies would be irreſiſtible, whether they continued their warfare, *en maſſe*, or without this barbarous expedient, by the practice of military tactics.

The army of Britain could afford its Allies on the Continent, little, if any aid; for inſtead of ſending troops to its foreign ſettlements, the whole would be required for the defence of its own coaſts, having, in ſuch a ſituation, not only the ſouthern part of the Iſland to protect, but the northern and Ireland to guard againſt invaſions from the Netherlands.

If with this, we compare the naval power of France (ſuppoſing it to retain the coaſts which have been deſcribed) we ſhall find the reſult equally againſt the Belligerent Powers. The ſources of naval power are of two kinds, firſt, what is included under the general term of naval ſtores; and next, of ſeamen trained and formed by an extenſive trade.

The poſſeſſion of the Netherlands, and, of

of courſe, the command of the Scheldt, the Maeſe and the Rhine, would furniſh, independently of any importation, timber, tar, iron, hemp, proviſions of every deſcription, &c. ſufficient, both for the purpoſes of trade and of a marine*; and the internal produce of France and of the Netherlands would afford the commodities, which adminiſter both to the neceſſaries and luxuries of life; ſo that, without being expoſed to riſk, or to the expence of freight, France could of itſelf furniſh an indefinite quantity of materials for its marine.

The poſſeſſion of a coaſt, from the Pyrenees to North Holland, and this connected with all the large rivers of Europe which interſect its richeſt countries, and with the efforts on the one hand, of the moſt inventive, and on the other of the moſt laborious of its inhabitants, would, under a government where property ſhould be ſecure, ſoon become the nurſe of arts, manufactures and of internal and external trade.

Hence the marine of France might command the European Seas, and from the natural ambition of the people, would ſoon lead them to naval and commercial enterprizes, which might be formidable in the Weſt and in the Eaſt Indies.

* See Part V.

To

To this naval power is to be oppoſed that of Great Britain and of Ruſſia, ſuppoſing the link of connection between the two countries to remain. We muſt not, in conſidering the trade and marine of France, reaſon from the preſent extenſive ſcale of our own trade and marine, when that of our rival has been either deſtroyed by themſelves, or reduced by us, but we muſt ſuppoſe what our trade and marine would be, after thoſe of France had been reſtored, in proportion to the extent of its dominions.

In the article of naval ſtores, we have hitherto, in a great meaſure, depended on our imports from the Baltic and from America.* In every former war, our trade to the Baltic has continued to be nearly equal to what it was in peace, becauſe, except in the caſe of a war with Holland, we have had no enemy to oppoſe us in the Narrow Seas, the French having no acceſs to them, but from Dunkirk.

We muſt not, in the ſame manner, in conſidering the trade and marine of Britain, reaſon

* Flanders, from the moſt correct obſervations, could furniſh ſtores twenty per cent. cheaper, than the ſtores we import from Ruſſia.

from

from their extent, when the number of our ſeamen has kept pace with our immenſe coaſting trade, and with the magnitude and value of our diſtant dependencies, and when our navy is in proportion to our trade: we muſt rather make the compariſon, by looking forward to the revival of the trade and marine of our opponent, and to the proportion which both muſt bear to that of Britain, when this opponent ſhall be recognized to have the command of the northern coaſts of Europe, and of the Mediterranean, or can meet us in the Channel, in the Narrow Seas, and beyond the Streights of Gibraltar.

In this ſituation, the number of our ſeamen muſt decreaſe, in proportion as the trade of our rival riſes, and the ſcenes in which our navy will have to act be multiplied, in proportion as the fleets of our enemy can be formed in the ports of the Netherlands (Auſtrian and Dutch), and ready to act againſt our coaſting and Baltic trade, as they have hitherto done in the Channel againſt our foreign commerce.

3. We have, in the third place, to make a compariſon of the reſources of France, and of Britain and its Allies.

The reſources of France furniſh three diſtinct aſpects, viz.

—What they have been during the preſent war;

—What they were at the fall of the Monarchy; and,

—What they may be, upon the ſuppoſition of the arts of peace being reſtored, and the territories above deſcribed included in the French Republic.

The firſt aſpect, being in itſelf a contradiction to all the arts of peace, may be deemed incompatible with any form of government, or any ſyſtem of law which protects life and property, or any treaty between France and other independent nations; it is therefore, in ſome meaſure, out of the queſtion, unleſs the new government of France ſhall embrace that degree of revolutionary ſpirit, which may enable its ſucceſſive rulers again to reſort to the ſeizure of the property of individuals, to the creation of aſſignats, and to the circulation of them, by the ſyſtem of terror.

It has been incontrovertibly proved, that the immenſe reſources which were thrown by theſe means into the hands of the firſt and

ſecond

ſecond Aſſemblies, and of the Convention, were the real cauſes of the progreſs of the war: It is true, that immenſe ſums have been obtained from the ſale of the crown and church lands, from that of the property, real and perſonal, of the emigrants, and from that of the property of the merchant, manufacturer, and farmer, which have been ſeized, profeſſedly, as a fund or ſecurity for the aſſignats, but really to defray the charges of the war, and to ſupport the unprincipled ambition and avarice of the ſhifting governors of that devoted country.

The reſources of France thus were in proportion to the ſpoils of the kingdom and of the conquered countries: to their immenſe amount, however, the ſucceſs of the Republic has been owing, ſo that now, when they appear to be drying up, or no longer to exiſt, neither enthuſiaſm nor the guillotine can enable the rulers of the Republic, for any length of time, to continue hoſtilities with effect*.

The ſecond aſpect, or what the French reſources were at the fall of the Monarchy, furniſhes, at leaſt, eſtimates of the revenue,

* D'Ivernois's Curſory View of the Aſſignats, (1795.) and Etat des Finances et des Reſſources de la République Françaiſe, (1796.)

which the kingdom paid, while the Monarchy was regular and its territory bounded by the countries which now are included in the dominions of the Republic.

According to Abbé Terray, who was Miniſter at the acceſſion of Louis XVI. in 1774, the expence for that year was - *liv.* 224,720,000*
The receipt - - - 196,901,557

Deficit liv. 27,818,443

But the actual increaſe of expences was - - - - 12,400,000†

Total Deficit 40,218,443

[Réponſe de M. Calonne à l'écrit de M. Necker, p. 64.]

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* Or in pounds ſterling.

Expence - - -	£.9,363,333	6 8
Receipt - - -	8,204,231	10 10
Deficit	£.1,159,101	15 10
† Encreaſed expences - -	516,666	13 4
Total Deficit	£. 1,675,768	9 2

According

According to M. de Clugny, in 1776, the expences were § - - - *liv.* 402,574,651*
The receipt - - - 378,381,069

Deficit 24,193,582

But if to this ſum be added the amount of the loan made for the marine, and paid from the finance - - - - - 13,000,000†

The total deficit will be - 37,193,582

According to M. Necker, in the Compte rendu, addreſſed to the King in 1781, the receipt for that year was - - *liv.* 264,154,000‡
The expences - - - 253,954,000

Surplus 10,200,000

§ Réponſe de M. Calonne, p. 67.

* Expences - - - £.16,773,943 15 10
Receipt - - - 15,765,877 17 6

Deficit 1,008,065 18 4
† Loan - - - - 541,666 13 4

Total Deficit £ 1,549,732 11 8

‡ Receipt - - - £.11,006,416 13 4
Expences - - - 10,581,416 13 4

Surplus £.425,000 0 0

And the exceedings employed for re-imburſements were § - - *liv.* 17,326,666*

M. Calonne, in his anſwer to M. Necker, makes the actual receipt for the

ſame year †† - -	236,833,000†
The expences - -	283,162,000
Deficit	46,329,000
Difference in the two accounts, *liv.*	56,529,000‡
viz. Error in the receipt - -	27,321,000
Error in the expences - -	29,208,000
	56,529,000

§ Oeuvres de M. Necker, Tom. 3. p. 140.

†† Réponſe de M. Calonne, &c. p. 64.

* Exceedings - - -	£.721,944 8 4
† Receipt - - -	£.9,868,041 13 4
Expences - - -	11,798,416 13 4
Deficit	£.1,930,375 0 0
‡ Difference - - - -	£.2,355,375
viz. Error in Receipt - - -	1,138,375
—— in Expences - - -	1,217,000
Total Deficit	£.2,355,375

But at the end of M. Necker's adminiſtration, M. Calonne makes the deficit § *liv.* 70,000,000*.

At the commencement of M. Calonne's adminiſtration, in November 1783, the deficit was†† - - - 80,000,000†

At the cloſe of M. Calonne's adminiſtration in April, 1787, the expences were 589,184,995‡
The receipt - - 474,047,629

Deficit 115,137,366‖

§ Réponſe de M. Calonne, p. 71 & 78.

†† Ibid. p. 86 & 94.

‖ Ibid. p. 95 & Tables 55.

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* Deficit - - - £.2,916,666 13 4

† Deficit - - - £.3,333,333 6 8

‡ Expences - - - £.24,549,374 15 10
Receipt - - - 19,751,984 10 10

Deficit £.4,797,390 5 0

According

According to an apperçu drawn up in 1789, the receipt for that year was, *liv.* 640,546,049*
The expences, - - 633,153,041

Surplus, - - - 7,393,008§

Upon theſe ſtatements, however, we may remark, that though the particular taxes in France were enormous, from the ſums laid upon particular commodities, as the gabelle or tax upon ſalt, and were felt as oppreſſive by the lower orders of the people, the actual amount of the whole taxes bore no ſort of proportion to the property which might have been taxed, even with advantage to the national funds, if theſe funds had been placed, upon the ſame broad baſis, as thoſe of Great Britain.

The deficiencies above enumerated, though they, in fact, contributed to the fall of the mo-

§ Apperçu de l'Etat de ſituation des finances de la France, Année 1789, enſemble le réſumé de l'étendue de la population, et des contributions de chaque generalité du Royaume.

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* Receipt - - -	£. 26,689,418	14	2
Expences - - -	26,381,376	14	2
Surplus - - - -	£. 308,042	0	0

narchy, will by no means produce a like revolution, if the monarchy ſhall be reſtored under a limited character, becauſe, in this caſe, the exemptions of the nobles, of the churchmen, and of the members of the twelve Parliaments of France would be done away.

Suppoſing next, that the expenditure of the Republic, from its unnatural reſources, ſhould leave it in a ſtate of abſolute bankruptcy, and of courſe, its debts at an end; or ſuppoſing, what would be juſt, an intereſt only to be paid for the exiſting debts before the Revolution, when according to Mr. Calonne, the receipt was 474,047,629 livres*, there would be a ſufficient fund for the diſcharge of intereſt, as well as for a part of the expences of the government. New taxes would therefore only be required to defray the remainder of the expences of government, if ſuch taxes ſhould be neceſſary, the exemptions having been done away.

The third aſpect proceeds upon the ſuppoſition, that the arts of peace ſhall be reſtored and the territory of the Republic ſhall include its preſent conqueſts. There are two diſtinct views which we may take of ſuch reſources; one, is

* £. 19,751,914 10s. 10d.

the application of them for liquidating the debts which would be incurred by realizing the aſſignats, upon the ſame principle that America did her paper currency. It does not appear, upon any theory of financial œconomy, even ſuppoſing the aſſignats to be funded, and the loweſt poſſible intereſt paid for them, that this payment could be practicable, and even ſuppoſing it poſſible, ſtill it would require ſo long a period to give ſuch funds value, that the revenues, even of their extenſive dominions, would leave them but ſcanty means for diſturbing the peace of Europe. Another is, (and, judging from the moral character of the preſent rulers of France, the moſt probable,) that the aſſignats ſhall be extinguiſhed, and with them the old debts of the monarchy. In this caſe, the nation would be literally regenerated, and like a diſcharged bankrupt enter again into buſineſs, but upon an immenſe fund, proportioned to the produce of its large domains.

Let the firſt taxation be equal only to the expences of the government, and this as low as poſſible; let the preſent rulers be ſuppoſed to change their characters, and to become honeſt men; the moment the arts of peace ſhall return and property be protected by law, the revenue, from a country extending over the moſt rich and fertile part of Europe, could not be eſtimated at leſs than

than the old revenue of France, and the old revenue of the conquered countries added to it; hence, without intereſt of debts to pay, France would have a clear revenue, at the loweſt calculation, equal to that of all the Belligerent Powers, and with the advantage, that the revenues of its opponents would be loaded with the intereſt of the debts which now attach to each nation.

If with theſe reſources of France, taken in any of the three poſſible aſpects in which they can be placed, we contraſt the reſources of the Belligerent Powers, we ſhall find the amount of the latter not to bear any proportion to that of the former.

The net revenues of Great Britain may be taken, according to their preſent amount, at £. 18,500,000

Suppoſing peace reſtored, and the manufactures and commerce of this country, in conſequence of its being the only nation in Europe poſſeſſed of credit, to extend to the utmoſt poſſible magnitude, and ſuppoſing, from the preſent ſtate of our trade, the miniſter's plan of a gradual liquidation of the debt, to proceed at the rate of two or three millions annually, the ſitua-

tion of the two countries, in point of reſources, would by no means balance each other; for the one would not have the intereſt of any debt to diſcharge, and the other the intereſt of three hundred millions to pay.

Suppoſing next, that the trade and credit of France ſhould revive, and that, in proportion to the extent of its dominions, Britain not only would have a rival in every market, but the French trade would be eſtabliſhed in ſeas, in which, during peace, it has hitherto been inconſiderable and in war impracticable.

The revenues of Auſtria, conſidering the long wars in which it has been engaged during the laſt ten years, (the acceſſion from Poland being ſuppoſed to balance the loſs in Flanders,) and the immenſe debt, which it has incurred, cannot be eſtimated but as yielding an inconſiderable ſurplus; for, from the disjointed ſituation of its dominions, and from the large military peace eſtabliſhment which it will have to maintain, we can calculate upon nothing farther than its having no deficit, or an inconſiderable ſurplus for many years.

The reſources of Sardinia are, not only little more than ſufficient for its peace eſtabliſhment, but totally unfit (as has appeared from the ſubſidy we pay to that crown) for the operations of war.

From

From this compariſon, the following inferences obtrude themſelves:

1. The territory of France, including its conqueſts, would not only be more extenſive than that of Britain and its Allies, but by its concentrated ſituation better calculated for offenſive and defenſive war; ſince the Allies from the loſs of Flanders, would have no immediate means of uniting their power, and muſt each maintain a ſeparate war with France, without deriving any military or naval aid from each other.

2. The armies of France would not only be more numerous but more united than thoſe of the Allies, and therefore, whether the former attacked *en maſſe* or by regular tactics, they muſt be ſuperior to the latter. The fleets of France would then comprehend not only their former force but that of Holland, and what might be expected from the ports of Flanders, which hitherto have not furniſhed any ſhare of the naval ſtrength of Europe.

3. The reſources of France, upon any of the preceding ſyſtems, would be equal to thoſe of the Allies united, and upon the laſt mentioned, and moſt probable ſyſtem, greater and more effectually applicable to war than thoſe of the Allies.

PART II.

Review of the Treaties in ſucceſſion, which have been formed, to create and maintain the Balance of Power in Europe, with the inferences which each Period of theſe Treaties ſeems to authorize.

CONTENTS

Progreſſive Political Situation of the Powers who have been Parties in the Treaties which created and have maintained the Balance of Power—Of France—Of Germany—Of the Netherlands—Of England—The political Situation of France, the Principle adopted for the Arrangement of the Treaties reſpecting the Balance of Power—Firſt Period of theſe Treaties, from 1516 to 1668, with the hiſtorical Events which led to them—Firſt Inference from this Period of the Treaties—Proofs illuſtrative of it from Hiſtory—Second Inference from this Period of the Treaties—Proofs from Hiſtory to illuſtrate it—Second Period of Treaties for preſerving the Balance of Power, from 1668 to 1795, with the hiſtorical Events which led to them—Barrier of the Netherlands defined—Balance of Power in Europe defined—Firſt Inference from this Period of the Treaties—Illuſtrations from Hiſtory—Second Inference from this Period of

of the Treaties—Illuſtrations from Hiſtory—Third Inference, or rather Chain of Inferences, from this Period of the Treaties.

THE hiſtory of the Powers, who have been parties in the treaties, for maintaining a balance of power in Europe, will beſt explain the objects and ſpirit of them. Though the feudal ſyſtem in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Great Britain, terminated in producing different forms of ſubordination, yet the ſovereigns in all theſe countries proceeded upon the common principle, of maintaining the independence of their dominions, and preſerving the reſources they derived from trade.

The hiſtory of France may be divided, in ſo far as regards theſe treaties, into two periods; the one extends from the reign of Francis I. to the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1668, during which the Monarchy was acquiring a fixed character; the other from this treaty, when the Monarchy was conſolidated, to its fall in 1789.

The hiſtory of Germany may be divided into three periods; the firſt extending from the reign of Charles V. to the truce with Holland 1612; the ſecond, from this truce to the peace of Weſtphalia, 1648, during which the conteſts between the

the Powers of the empire, and the exhauſted ſtate of their reſources led to new plans, for the reſtoration of their ſeparate rights; the third, from the preceding treaty to the opening of the preſent war, during which, France made important acquiſitions on the frontier of the empire, viz. in Alſace, Loraine, Franche Compté, and in Flanders, by directing its politics to excite the leading Powers in Germany to jealouſies and wars againſt each other.

The hiſtory of the Netherlands, like that of Germany, may be divided into three diſtinct periods;—

The firſt, extends from the acquiſition of the Seventeen Provinces by Charles V. to the riſe and independence of the Dutch power, during which, it was the object of England, on the one hand, to keep open its trade with the Netherlands, and to prevent Spain and the Emperor, as ſovereigns of the Netherlands, from becoming a predominant power on the continent of Europe; and, on the other hand, France, from acquiring dominions in Flanders, or on the ſide of Germany, which might render its political influence paramount, and give it the command of the inhabitants and produce of the Netherlands.

The ſecond period extends from the truce between Spain and the Dutch, 1612, till Flanders was ſeparated from the crown of Spain, and became an appanage of Auſtria, during which the ſame political and commercial ſyſtem was obſerved by England, in regard to France, but varied in regard to the Netherlands, by ſupporting the Dutch againſt France and Spain, and its own commerce with the Netherlands by ſucceſſive treaties with the States.

The laſt period extends from the annexation of Flanders to the Houſe of Auſtria, to the preſent time, during which, the general policy has been, to conſider the Auſtrian Netherlands as a barrier againſt the encroachments of France, and as the means of preventing that monarchy from having a maritime force in the Narrow Seas.

The hiſtory of England may alſo, with a view to theſe treaties, be divided into three periods:

The firſt extends from the reign of Henry VIII. to the revolution in Holland, during which the object was to balance the power of France and the Emperor.

The ſecond extends from the firſt treaty of Queen

Queen Elizabeth with the Dutch, to the Revolution, 1688, when its objects fluctuated, as it was more or leſs under the influence of the French court.

The third extends from the Revolution 1688, to the fall of the French monarchy in 1789, during which, the ſyſtem has been almoſt uniform, viz. that of checking the French in their encroachments on the ſide of Flanders, both as a barrier againſt their aggrandizement, and as a ſecurity for the Britiſh trade in the German ocean.

We ſhall adopt, as a general principle of arrangement, the periods in the French hiſtory, viz. from the acceſſion of Francis I. to the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1668, when the monarchy was acquiring a fixed character; and from 1668 to 1789, during which, the monarchy was conſolidated and fell. In the firſt of theſe periods, the treaties had varied objects, but in the laſt, they had a defined object, both with regard to France and to its opponents. We can thus ſee the ſources, out of which the balance of power aroſe, trace it, till it became the leading rule of politics; and perceive the adherence to it, as a principle, to have been the true cauſe of the preſent war, and the only practical ground upon which, the preliminaries, for the reſtoration of peace in Europe, can reſt or proceed with ſafety to Great Britain.

The firſt period of the treaties, for forming a balance of power in Europe, extends from 1516, to 1668, and the following hiſtorical facts muſt be kept in view as the ſource of them.

Upon the decline of the feudal ſyſtem, Flanders, in connexion with the Hanſeatic league, became a great ſeat of commerce, to which the produce of the different countries in the north of Europe was carried to be exchanged, partly, for the imports brought to Bruges and Antwerp by the different European nations, and partly, for the produce of the Eaſt Indies, which, by caravans and the navigation of rivers, found its way to the ſhores of the Mediterranean.

While the Netherlands were divided between the Earls of Flanders and the Earls of Holland, &c. as proprietors of the northern diſtricts, which afterwards formed the United Provinces of the Dutch; and while the northern provinces of Germany were ſubject to leſſer princes, viz. Burgundy, Alſace, and Loraine; the power of France did not extend beyond Picardy and Artois, ſo that the country, now known by the name of French Flanders, formed a part of the domain of the Houſe of Burgundy, and the diſtricts of Alſace and Loraine were integral parts of the German empire.

England

England had no ſooner begun its commercial progreſs than it formed treaties, for the maintenance of an intercourſe with the 17 Provinces of the Netherlands, and very early eſtabliſhed its ſtaple at Bruges and Antwerp, under privileges granted to it by the Dukes of Burgundy, as Earls of Flanders.*

The nations of Europe were in this ſituation when the Emperor, Charles V. by deſcent became Sovereign of Flanders and Brabant, and by his power and intrigues, of what were termed the 17 Provinces of the Netherlands; at the ſame time he was King of Spain and Emperor of Germany. Theſe immenſe dominions and this extenſive power excited a natural jealouſy in Francis I. whoſe dominions lay on every ſide encircled by thoſe of Charles. This jealouſy became mutual, and gave riſe to the treaties which we ſhall find firſt defining (what was afterwards emphatically denominated) the balance of power among the European nations.

Great Britain, at this period, was divided into two diſtinct ſovereignties; England and Ireland, comprehended in the one, were ſo much more powerful than Scotland, that this laſt looked to its

* See Part III.

con-

connexion with France, as the means of preſerving its independency; yet Henry VIII. though alternately duped by Charles and Francis, was enabled to maintain an equilibrium of their power, being in a ſituation, from his poſſeſſion of Calais, to attack either the one or the other, and, at the ſame time, to preſerve for his ſubjects their commercial privileges in the dominions of both theſe Princes.

After the death of Charles and of Francis, Philip II. who ſucceeded to Spain and the Netherlands, became leſs formidable than Charles had been, becauſe the German dominions of Charles had paſſed to a different branch of the family, and becauſe the reformation in religion had now produced civil commotions in Germany; the diſputes about the ſucceſſion excited alſo a civil war in France, and a total change of opinion, reſpecting religion, formed contending parties in Britain.

It was in this ſituation of Europe, that the ſplendid talents of Queen Elizabeth were called forth to diſplay a conduct, reſpecting France and the Low Countries, which enabled her both to maintain the poſſeſſion of her throne, and to curb the encroachments of France on the Netherlands, and of Philip II. on the riſing power of the Dutch.

Upon

Upon the acceſſion of James to the crown of England the influence of France in Scotland ceaſed, but the ancient commercial privileges of the Scottiſh nation in Holland and Zealand remained, and were even ſtrengthened by the connexion of theſe countries with England. The alliance which Elizabeth had formed with the Dutch enabled James, without efforts, to have a decided influence on all the pretenſions of the nations on the Continent, and to maintain his commercial treaties with the Netherlands and with France, but he allowed himſelf, in general politics, to be the dupe of this laſt court.

Upon the acceſſion of Louis XIV. the French Monarchy began to be defined. His able Miniſters, in ſucceſſion, not only availed themſelves of all the circumſtances which could narrow into a pure monarchy the privileges of the provinces in his kingdom, but formed thoſe armies and fleets which were to extend the dominions of the Sovereign, on the ſide of Germany and of Flanders, and to combat the maritime power of England and of Holland.

An accidental event had already contributed to connect the whole of this political chain. Towards the cloſe of the 16th century, diſcoveries

in

in geometry and in aſtronomy, with what had formerly been known, the uſe of the mariner's compaſs, produced equally a ſpirit of enterprize, and a total change on the commerce of Europe.

The diſcovery of America, and of the Cape of Good Hope as the route to the Eaſt Indies, had opened to Spain and Portugal immenſe acceſſions of power and of riches.

The ancient route of the trade, from the Mediterranean to the Netherlands and the Hanſe-towns, was therefore gradually abandoned, and Holland, England, and France eagerly ſought after advantages in new ſettlements and a new trade which promiſed a boundleſs encreaſe of their reſources and naval ſtrength. At this time the immenſe territory of France, after Louis XIV had acquired Alſace, Loraine, Franche Comté, and the old barrier of the Netherlands, revived the jealouſy of the European States, particularly of the maritime powers, and with it gave more correct views of the balance of power, particularly, as this ſovereign attached to his ſucceſs, pretentions to univerſal empire.

Theſe preliminary obſervations will enable us to diſcover the ſource of the treaties, which were formed

formed to eſtabliſh the balance of power in Europe, though it may be better to poſtpone the definition of that term, 'till it ſhall ariſe out of the circumſtances which rendered it the principle of the public law of the European nations.

Though it be difficult to ſeparate the treaties under the heads of political and commercial, into which, from the nature of the ſubject, they ſeem to divide themſelves, the attempt may be made, by keeping in view theſe objects diſtinctly.

1516.—Henry VIII. formed a treaty with Charles V. who had ſucceeded to the ſovereignty of the Netherlands. The object of Henry was to ſtrengthen his power in the war which he was undertaking againſt France.*

1528.—A treaty was formed between the Emperor Charles, England, and France, for the purpoſe of guaranteeing their reſpective poſſeſſions, and extending the trade of the Netherlands and of England.†

* Rymer's Fœdera, Vol. 13, p. 533.

† Rymer's Fœdera, Vol. 14, p. 258,—Philip ſucceeded Charles in 1555, and the Dutch Revolution happened in 1579, which gave a new character to the treaties, for maintaining the reciprocal relations of the European powers.

1578.—Queen Elizabeth formed her firſt treaty with the Dutch, or United Netherlands. The object of this politic ſovereign was to check the growing power of Spain, which already had threatened the deſtruction of her kingdom, by having the command of the coaſts of the Netherlands, as well as thoſe of Spain, at the ſame time, that ſhe was equally jealous of the encroachments which France was making on the ancient barrier of Flanders.*

1609.—A truce was formed between Spain and the States General, recogniſing the indepen-

* Rymer's Fœdera, Vol. 15, p. 784,—The long war, during this period, between Spain and the Dutch, ruined the trade at Antwerp and gave riſe to the meaſure of ſhutting up the Scheldt, a meaſure, for which the States General have uniformly contended, as being neceſſary for the ſafety of the ſeats of their trade, while the ſovereigns of the Spaniſh or Auſtrian Netherlands have acquieſced in the reſtriction, on account of the aids which they have derived from Holland and from England, in defending their remaining provinces in the Netherlands, and the countries on the French ſide of the Rhine.

It has been the uniform policy of France, in all its wars, to wreſt the Netherlands both from Spain and from the Houſe of Auſtria, and it has been the object of England to keep them detached from France, both to prevent the encreaſe of the power of her rival, and to preſerve her ſhare of the commerce of this inlet to Germany.

dence

dence of the Dutch; and James I. agreed to ſupply the States with certain quotas of troops and ſhips of war.*

1648 —The treaty of Munſter between Philip IV. King of Spain, and the States General of Holland, proceeded upon the ſame principle with the preceding truce, particularly the ſhutting up of the Scheldt, and this appears to have been connected with the treaty which Oliver Cromwell entered into with the States in 1645.†

1668.—The treaty of St. Germaine en Laye, between Louis XIV. and Charles II. of England, and the States General of Holland, for procuring a peace between France and Spain, laid the foundation for the acquiſitions which the French afterwards made on the ſide of Flanders, Brabant, Loraine &c. and became the baſis of the ſubſequent treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1668, between

* Batavia Illuſtrata, p. 395.

Henry IV. of France, at this juncture, was meditating the ſeizure of part of the Netherlands, and therefore it became the intereſt of Spain, to be able to preſerve its remaining provinces in Flanders, in order, on the one hand, to be in a ſituation to keep the Dutch to the terms of the treaty, viz. *uti poſſidetis*, and on the other, to check the ſchemes of Henry, on the ſide of Flanders, Loraine and Alſace.

† Treaties, 1785, Vol. 1, p. 10 and 44.

France and Spain, by which Spain, as ſovereign of the Netherlands, ceded to France what had formerly been held as the barrier towns of the Netherlands, viz. Charleroy, Binch, Ath, Douay, Fort Scarpe, Tournay, Oudenard, Liſle, Armentiers, Courtray, Bergues, and Furnes, with all their dependencies, but reſtored Burgundy, or Franche Comté.*

X The firſt inference from this period of the treaties, ſeems to be; that it has been the invariable object of France, to extend her dominions on the ſide of the Netherlands, and on that part of Germany which commands the navigation of the Rhine, under the impreſſion, that if both could be acquired, ſhe could, on the one hand, reſtrain the navy and ruin the trade of England, and on the other, from the manner in which power is divided in the German empire, and in the countries bordering on Italy, become the paramount power in Europe.

The following proofs from hiſtory will ſerve to illuſtrate this inference, and they are drawn from the politics and conduct of the French ſove-

* General Collection of Treaties, Vol. 1, p. 156.

reigns

reigns and miniſters, during the period in which the preceding chain of treaties was formed.

1. Philip de Commines, in his Hiſtory of France, recommending the importance of making conqueſts of the dominions of the Houſe of Burgundy, to Louis XI, who laid the firſt foundation of the greatneſs of the French Monarchy, ſays; "Thoſe that ſhall hereafter read this hiſtory, will "wonder, that the Engliſh ſuffered the King to "take the towns bordering ſo near upon them, "namely, Arras, Bolloin, Ardes, and Heden, "with divers other caſtles, and to lie ſo long "with his camp before St. Omer's, but the King "of France, in wiſdom and ſenſe, far ſurmounted "Edward IV. of England, and as he knew that "the Engliſh were inclined to make war upon "his realm, he made the ſervants of their King "goodly preſents, and ſent home the Ambaſſa-"dors with goodly words and princely rewards, "notwithſtanding that ſome of them underſtood, "that he did this only to win time, the better to "atchieve his enterprize, in the conqueſt of the "Duke of Burgundy's dominions."*

2. The

* Such was the opinion of an hiſtorian who wrote three hundred years ago, and is referred to by Lord Townſend, and

2. The Preſident Jeannin, gave his maſter Henry IV. of France, the following advice, reſpecting the peace which was afterwards concluded with Spain at Vervins, in 1598.

" The Queen of England, (Elizabeth) will be " always juſt ſo much for us, as ſhe ought to be " for reaſons of ſtate, and no farther, ſhe deſires " the encreaſe of France in the Low Countries " no more than that of Spain, and therefore her " aſſiſtance cannot be depended on, if we conti- " nue in the war, in hopes of conquering the " Netherlands from Spain; therefore, if Spain be " ſuffered to be maſter of the Low Countries, " and either to keep them for itſelf or give them " to the Archduke Albert, in marriage with the " Infanta Iſabella, France will have to be afraid, " that the ancient alliance between England and " the Houſe of Burgundy, will be renewed, of " which we have formerly felt ſo many bad ef- " fects, therefore ſhe adviſes the peace with Spain, " that it may be at liberty to conclude this mar- " riage, and thus have for a neighbour, a petty

and Mr. Poyntz in their celebrated Defence of the Barrier Treaty. The proof of this laſt work, being written by thoſe Miniſters, will be found in Tindall's Continuation, Vol. IV. p. 111.—(Note 1.)

" prince,

" prince; if the marriage cannot be accom-
" pliſhed and the Infanta given to Albert, he
" will not dare to become the King's enemy, and
" from him little is to be feared, for though
" France would have nothing to fear from ſuch a
" prince, ſuch a prince would have a great deal
" to fear from France."*

3. Sully, the Miniſter of Henry IV. of France, informs us, " that it was the view of Lewis
" XIII. and of the Queen Mother, to form a
" Spaniſh match, to obtain the Netherlands, and
" that Henry IV. would have done the ſame thing,
" and have married the Infanta of Spain, were ſhe
" never ſo old and ugly, if he could have married
" the Low Countries with her."†

4. When Spain would not conſent to give the Netherlands, as a dowry with the Infanta, Richlieu propoſed to the Dutch a partition of the Netherlands, provided they would refuſe to make peace with Spain, and join their arms with France; a draft of a treaty was actually made for this purpoſe in 1635, but the States having diſcovered what the ambitious views of France aimed at, and

* Barrier Treaty Vindicated, p. 32. 33.
† Ibid. p. 52.

that

that the object was, to remove the barrier of the Netherlands, and afterwards to quarrel with them, and continue its conquests; they broke off the negociation, and defeated the intentions of Richlieu by the peace of Munster, 1648.*

5. Mazarin, who succeeded Richlieu, offered to Spain, to give up all the conquests which France had made in Roussillon and Catalonia, if Spain would either give the Netherlands in exchange, or under the notion of a dowry with the Infanta; and when Spain would not consent to either, France had it excluded from the treaty of Munster, and continued the war against it for twelve years. Mazarin finding that the marriage could not be effected without a renunciation of the Netherlands, advised the marrying the Infanta with such a renunciation, giving as his reason, that the King might, by virtue of such a match, pretend at any time, to the succession to the crown of Spain, and to a right to the Low Countries. The marriage accordingly took place, by the Pyrenean treaty, 1659, by which France obtained considerable acquisitions, and a kind of title to more in the Low Countries.†

* Barrier Treaty Vindicated, p. 52.

† Ibid. p. 54.

6th. Upon

6. Upon the death of Philip IV. of Spain, in 1667, Louis XIV. invaded Flanders in right of his Queen, and all the ſucceſſive wars in which Europe has been involved, have proceeded upon this claim of France; for, from that time forward, it has been the object of the miniſters of the French Court to excite quarrels and rebellions in every part of Europe, particularly in England and Holland, that they might have opportunities to obtain farther ceſſions in Flanders, Burgundy, Alſace, and Loraine, making it always the price of any treaty, to give up any other conqueſt, provided in theſe lines they could extend their dominions. Hence the reſentment of Louis XIV. in 1672, againſt the Dutch, for joining in the triple alliance, and hence the intrigues with Charles II. and James II. to prevent England from ſupporting the Dutch, till at laſt the elevation of King William to the throne of England produced the confederacy, to be ſtated in the next period, between Holland, England, the Emperor and Empire, to reſiſt the encroachments of France.

It was this confederacy which gave riſe to what have ſince been termed, the Whig Opinions, reſpecting the balance of power in Europe, which opinions, we ſhall find, have been followed by the ſucceeding monarchs of the Houſe of Brunſwick.

The ſecond inference from this period of the treaties ſeems to be ;—

That it has been held to be a principle of political conduct, with the moſt wiſe Engliſh Sovereigns and Stateſmen, and with Parliament, during this period, that the ſafety of England, in all political and commercial reſpects, depended on the Netherlands being preſerved as a barrier againſt France, to prevent its obtaining that aggrandizement and power which would endanger the liberties of Europe.—The following proofs from hiſtory go to the illuſtration of this inference:

1. In the early period of the preceding review of treaties, Antwerp was the principal ſeat of commerce on the continent of Europe; therefore all the treaties, during the ſixteenth and ſeventeenth centuries, between England and the Netherlands, proceeded upon the importance of that great outlet to our ſtaple, adjuſting always the terms upon which the Engliſh and Flemiſh markets could trade. This ſeems more remarkable towards the cloſe of the ſixteenth century, when the civil wars in the Netherlands took place.

2. Queen Elizabeth ſucceeded to the throne of England at a period when ſhe had, for the preſervation

ſervation of her own power and the independency of her kingdoms, on the one hand, to prevent the Houſe of Auſtria (into which the weight of Spain was thrown), from becoming predominant; and, on the other, the crown of France from acquiring the command of Europe. She perceived that the attempt of Spain was not ſo dangerous as that of France, becauſe the other dominions of the former were more remote from England and the Netherlands than thoſe of the latter; but ſhe did not take part with France in its attempts to make conqueſts in the Low Countries, holding it to be ſafer, for her own dominions, to encourage a third power, diſtinct from both, viz. the Dutch, who, in conjunction with England, might be able to lower the power of Spain, without raiſing that of France, and might, upon occaſions, balance either. She wiſely ſaw, that the moſt ſevere blow ſhe could give to Spain, was to encourage the Dutch, as this would remove the danger which threatened her own kingdom, from the nearneſs of ſo formidable a power; but, at the ſame time, ſhe guarded againſt the encroachments of France, foreſeeing that their commanding the Narrow Seas would expoſe the trade of the coaſt of England to perpetual danger, and its

riſing naval power to oppoſition in ſeas of which her navy was in poſſeſſion.*

That ſuch was the Queen's general policy, appears from a declaration, drawn up at this period (1585) by her Secretary Cecil, and printed and publiſhed by her order;

" This declaration, we hope, ſhall of all " perſons abroad be well interpreted, as wee " knowe it will be of ſuch as are not ledde by " parciallitie, that upon the often and continuall " lamentable requeſts made to us by the univerſall " States of the countries of Holland, Zeland, " Guelders, and other provinces with them " united, (being deſperate of the King of Spayne's " favours,") &c.†

" We deſire to obtaine by God's favour, three " ſpecial things, 1ſt. A deliverānce of them from " warre, by the Spaniardes and Forraines. 2d. A " reſtitution of their ancient liberties and govern- " ment by ſome chriſtiān peace, and thereby, a " ſuretie

* Lord Townſend's Barrier Treaty vindicated. p. 31 to 38.

† Declaration of the cauſes mooving the Queene of England, to give aide to the defence of the people afflicted and oppreſſed in the Lowe Countries.

" ſuretie for ourſelves and our realme, to be free " frõm invading neighbours, and 3d. Our people " to enjoy in thoſe countries their lawful com- " merce and entercourſe of friendſhip and mar- " chandiſe, according to the ancient uſage and " treaties of entercourſe, made betwixt our pro- " genitors and the Lordes and Earles of thoſe coun- " tries, and betwixt our people and the people of " thoſe countries."*

Events, in a ſhort time, farther illuſtrated this wiſe procedure. The armies of the league had, in a meaſure, excluded Henry IV from Britanny and Normandy, and the queen, afraid that theſe coaſts, oppoſed to England might fall under the influence of the Spaniſh power, ſent troops and money to aſſiſt in recovering them to France. She held it, at the ſame time, to be her intereſt to keep in balance theſe contending parties, 'till the peace of Vervins, between France and Spain, obliged her to ſtrengthen her alliance with the Dutch, both to prevent Spain from becoming poſſeſſed of a greater ſhare of the Netherlands, than was conſiſtent with her views of the independence of England, and to check France in acquiring ports in Flanders, which might interrupt the commerce of her

* Declaration of the Cauſes, &c. p. 19.

her kingdom, and oppoſe her navy in the Narrow Seas.*

The impreſſion which this wiſe policy of Queen Elizabeth had upon France, during the inactive reign of James I. and the unfortunate reign of Charles I. can beſt be deſcribed by Jeannin, in the advice which he gave to Louis XIII;—He ſays, "That an alliance with the Houſe of Burgundy was always coveted by the crown of England, for it is their conſtant intereſt againſt France;"—therefore, in 1622, when he conſiders whether war or peace with Spain and Holland, were moſt for the intereſts of his maſter; he adds, "As for the King of England, he has no reaſon "to doubt that he would promote a peace between "them, upon ſuch and ſuch terms, becauſe that "would be in effect to renew the ancient alliance "with the Houſe of Burgundy, between Spain, "which had ſucceeded to it, himſelf and all the "Low Countries; an alliance, which the Kings "of England have always been fond of, and this "the two Kings of England and Spain will think, "as uſeful to them, as it will be prejudicial to

* Letters of the Queen and her Miniſters, preſerved in Sir Thomas Edmonds' negociations with France and Bruſſels, from 1592 to 1617, publiſhed by Mr. Birch.

"France,

" France, there being nothing, which the King " (Louis XIII) ought not to endeavour, to at- " tempt to hinder it."*

3. Cromwell, who, under the pretence of liberty, eſtabliſhed a moſt deſpotic government, was ſecretly ſupported by Mazarin, and therefore connived at the French encroachments on the ſide of the Netherlands, at the very time that the French Court was favoring the reſtoration of Charles, and yet this very ſovereign and James II, after the reſtoration, were ſo completely duped by the French miniſters, as to endeavour to counteract the opinions of the Parliament, and of the Engliſh nation, who, from the wiſe politics of Elizabeth, were ſatisfied that their ſafety depended upon the French being kept out of Flanders, and Spain prevented from cruſhing the Dutch.

4. In 1676-7, March 10th, the Commons addreſſed Charles II, repreſenting, " That the minds " of your Majeſty's people were much diſquieted, " with the manifeſt danger ariſing to your Majeſty's " kingdoms by the growth and power of the " French King, eſpecially by the acquiſitions al- " ready made, and the farther progreſs likely to " be made by him in the Spaniſh Netherlands,

* Letters of the Queen, &c. p. 34.

" in the preſervation and ſecurity whereof, we " humbly conceive, the intereſt of your Majeſty, " and the ſafety of your people, are highly con- " cerned; and therefore we moſt humbly beſeech " your Majeſty, to take the ſame into your royal " care, and to ſtrengthen yourſelf with ſuch " ſtricter alliances as may ſecure your Majeſty's " kingdoms, and preſerve and ſecure the ſaid " Netherlands, and thereby quiet the minds of " your Majeſty's people.*

When this addreſs went to the Lords for their concurrence, that Houſe wiſhed to connect with it the neceſſity of preventing the French King from getting poſſeſſion of Sicily. The Commons rejected the amendment, becauſe " The ſpecial " mention of Sicily would ſeem to put leſs weight " upon the preſervation of the Spaniſh Nether- " lands, the conſervation of which, the Commons " conceive to be of much more moment to his " Majeſty's kingdoms than that of Sicily; for, " though it may be of great importance to our " trade, that Sicily be not in the hands of the " French King, yet the ſafety of his Majeſty's " kingdoms is not ſo immediately endangered

* Journals, vol. ix. p. 376.

" thereby,

" thereby, and therefore ought not to be equally " inſiſted upon."*

A ſecond addreſs to the ſame effect, but in ſtronger terms, was reſolved on by the Houſe on the 29th of March 1677, requeſting the King to form alliances for this object †; A third, upon the 13th of April ‡; A fourth, upon the 16th §; A fifth, upon the 25th of May, intreating the King to enter into a league, offenſive and defenſive, with the States, for the preſervation of the Netherlands ‖; A ſixth, upon the 31ſt January following **; A ſeventh, upon the 15th of March, with a reſolution, that if his Majeſty would be pleaſed immediately to declare, and enter into actual war againſt the French King, the Commons would ſtand by him, and aſſiſt his Majeſty " with plen- " tiful ſupplies."†† An adjournment however took place, and the Dutch were forced into the treaty of Nimeguen, which left a great part of Flanders in poſſeſſion of the French.

* Journals, vol. ix. p. 400.
† Ibid. p. 408.
‡ Ibid. p. 419.
§ Ibid. p. 423.
‖ Ibid. p. 425.
** Ibid. p. 430.
†† Ibid. p. 455.

The Commons, on the 4th of May, 1678, came to reſolutions ſtill more ſtrong, viz. "That "it is the opinion of this Houſe, that his Majeſty "be humbly adviſed and deſired forthwith to "enter into preſent alliances and confedera- "tions with the Emperor and King of Spain, and "the States General of the United Provinces, for "the vigorous carrying on of the preſent war "againſt the French King, and for the good and "ſafety of his Majeſty's kingdoms; and particu- "larly, that effectual endeavours be uſed for con- "tinuing the States General in the preſent confe- "deration; and that it be agreed by all the par- "ties confederated, to prohibit all trade between "their ſubjects and countries, and France, and all "other the dominions of the French King; and "that no commodities of France, or any of the "dominions of the French King, be imported "into their countries from any place whatſoever; "and alſo, that all endeavours be uſed to invite "all other Princes and States into the ſaid confe- "deration; and that no truce or peace be made "or agreed to with the French King, by his Ma- "jeſty or any of the confederates, without general "conſent firſt had thereto."*

* Journals, vol. ix. p. 475.

On

On the 6th the King returned for anſwer ;— " His Majeſty having been acquainted with the " votes of this Houſe, of the 4th inſtant, was " very much ſurpriſed both with the matter and " form of them : But if his Majeſty had had ex- " ception to neither, yet his Majeſty having aſked " the advice of both Houſes, does not think fit " to give any anſwer to any thing of that nature, " 'till he hath a concurrent advice from both " Houſes."*

On the 7th the Commons reſolved, " That " an humble addreſs be preſented to his Majeſty, " that his Majeſty would be graciouſly pleaſed to " give a ſpeedy anſwer to the laſt addreſs preſented " to his Majeſty from this Houſe, of the 4th of " May inſtant ;" and, " That an addreſs be pre- " ſented to his Majeſty to remove the Duke of " Lauderdale from his councils and preſence."†

On the 27th the Commons again addreſſed the King, ſtating, that they conceived, " That " the preſent inconveniences and dangers, under " which the kingdom now lies, might either to- " tally, or in a great meaſure, have been prevented,

* Journals, vol. ix. p. 476.

† Ibid. p. 477.

 " if

" if your Majeſty had accepted of that advice,
" which in all humility and faithfulneſs, we pre-
" ſented to your Majeſty, upon the twenty-ſixth of
" May laſt; and which we re-iterated to your
" Majeſty, upon the one and thirtieth of January
" enſuing: The refuſing of which advice, and
" diſmiſſing of the Parliament, in May laſt, was
" the occaſion of thoſe ill conſequences which
" have ſucceeded, both at home and abroad; all
" which hath ariſen from thoſe miſrepreſentations
" of our proceedings, which have been ſuggeſted
" to your Majeſty, by ſome particular perſons, in
" a clandeſtine way, without the participation and
" advice, as we conceive, of your Council Board,
" as though we had invaded your Majeſty's prero-
" gative of making peace or war; whereas we did
" only offer our humble advice, in matters wherein
" the ſafety of the kingdom was concerned;
" which is a right was never yet queſtioned, in the
" times of your royal predeceſſors, and without
" which, your Majeſty can never be ſafe; upon
" which grounds your Majeſty was induced to
" give us ſuch anſwers to thoſe two addreſſes, re-
" jecting our advice, as thereby your Majeſty's
" good ſubjects have been infinitely diſcouraged,
" and the ſtate of your Majeſty's affairs reduced
" to a moſt deplorable condition: We do there-
" fore

" fore moſt humbly deſire, that for the good and " ſafety of this kingdom, and the ſatisfaction of " your ſubjects, your Majeſty would graciouſly be " pleaſed to remove thoſe counſellors who adviſed " the anſwers to our addreſſes of the ſix and twen- " tieth of May, and the one and thirtieth of " January laſt, or either of them.

" And we do further moſt humbly deſire your " Majeſty, favourably to accept this our humble " petition and addreſs, as proceeding from hearts " entirely devoted to your Majeſty's ſervice; and " that as we have never yet failed of giving teſti- " monies of our affection and loyalty to your " Majeſty's perſon and government, ſo your " Majeſty may reſt confidently aſſured, that we " ſhall never be wanting to ſupport your Majeſty's " greatneſs and intereſt, whilſt your Majeſty relies " upon our councils; which can have no other " end than what ſincerely tends thereunto, notwith- " ſtanding any ſiniſter or ſelf-intereſted endeavours " to make impreſſions in your Majeſty to the " contrary."*

* Journals, vol. ix. p. 479.—

After this addreſs the Houſe repeated its requeſt, for the removal of the Duke of Lauderdale, ibid. p. 480.

On

On the 23d the King informed the Houſe, " That he was reſolved, as far as he was able, to " ſave Flanders, either by a war or a peace, which " way ſoever he ſhould find moſt conducing to- " wards it; and that muſt be judged by circum- " ſtances as they play from abroad."*

On the 28th the King informed the Houſe, " That the moſt Chriſtian King hath made ſuch " offers for a ceſſation, 'till the 27th of July, as " His Majeſty does not only believe will be ac- " cepted, but does alſo verily believe will end in " a general peace."†

The King farther acquainted the Houſe, that a peace between Spain and Holland had taken place; but, when too late, informed it, that he believed, the Houſe would give a greater ſum than he aſked, for ſupporting the army, " rather than the ſingle " town of Oſtend ſhould be in the French hands, " and forty of their men of war in ſo good a " haven, over againſt the river's mouth."‡

The French, after the peace, reſolved to keep the places they had agreed to reſtore in the Netherlands, till thoſe taken by Sweden ſhould be reſtored, though this laſt circumſtance had not been mentioned, either in the preliminaries or in the treaty.§

* Journals, vol. ix. p. 481.

† Ibid. p. 484. ‡ Ibid. p. 499. § Ibid. p. 502.

James

James II. followed the ſame obſequiouſneſs to the court of France which Charles had done, and in the ſubſequent detail of the treaties, we ſhall find this conduct one of the principal ſources of the revolution.

The opinion of Lord Townſend and Mr. Poyntz, forms the beſt commentary on theſe events; "To have a good barrier againſt France "in the Netherlands, is as neceſſary for us as it "is, to preſerve a balance of power on the con- "tinent, and to prevent all Europe's being en- "ſlaved by France; for the ſituation of the Ne- "therlands is ſuch, with reſpect to Holland and "the Empire, and even to Britain itſelf, that if "France be once ſuffered to get poſſeſſion of them, "it will not be in the power of all Europe to ſet "any bounds to the progreſs of her arms."*

The ſecond period, in which we have to view the queſtion, reſpecting the Netherlands as a barrier, to prevent France from its fixed plan of making conqueſts in Flanders, and on the German empire towards the Rhine, extends from the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1668, to the fall of the monarchy in 1789.

At the opening of this period, Louis XIV. got poſſeſſion of what was conſidered to be the ancient

* Barrier treaty vindicated, p. 23.

barrier

barrier of Flanders, viz. the line of fortified towns from Cambray to Dunkirk, and alſo of ſeveral ſtrong towns on the French ſide of the Rhine, in ~~Burgundy~~ Picardy, Loraine, and Alſace, viz. Metz, Straſburg, &c. by which means the monarchy of that conqueror was conſolidated.

1676-7.—The Parliament of England, we have ſeen addreſſing Charles II. to form a treaty of defenſive alliance with the States General, ſpecifying the contingents each nation was to furniſh, in caſe of an attack.

This was followed by the treaty of alliance of the Hague, 1678; and this again by the treaty of Nimeguen between France and Spain, in the ſame year, by which France reſtored Charleroy, Binch, Ath, Oudenard and Courtray to Spain, but retained the countries to the verge of Menin and the town of Condé,* and the ſame year, the treaty of Nimeguen, between the Emperor and the King of France, by which the latter obtained Straſburgh, and the adjoining diſtricts on the Rhine.†

1685.

* Collection of treaties, vol. i. p. 218.

† Sir William Temple, in a letter to Lord Arlington, in 1669, ſays; That within two years after, if the King of France was well poſſeſſed of thoſe provinces, he doubted, no Prince or ſtate

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1686.—This propenſity led James, in the following year, to form a treaty with Louis XIV. which was conſidered by the Emperor, Spain and Holland to be detrimental to the common defence of Europe.

It was this treaty which led to the meaſure of ſending the Prince of Orange to England, the effect of which firſt appeared in the reſolution of the States to aſſiſt the Prince with an army and a fleet. For this conduct they aſſign the following reaſon, among others, in their reſolution, dated 28th October, 1688.—" That the States would thereby be put in a condition to concur in what

ſtate in Chriſtendom, would pretend to diſpute with him, any more than the Spaniards did then, and this was an event which, in his opinion, deſerved to be a little more thought on, than it was.†

† Barrier treaty vindicated, p. 56.

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† Barrier treaty vindicated, p. 56.

ſhall be for the common defence of Chriſtendom."*

1689.—Soon after the acceſſion of King William and Queen Mary, the Dutch declared war againſt France on the 9th of March.† England agreed to furniſh the States with a fleet and an army on the 29th of April; Spain declared war againſt France on the 3d of May;‡ King William declared war on the 7th of May; and theſe declarations were followed by the grand alliance between the Emperor, Spain, the States General, and King William, for the common defence. This treaty proceeds upon the circumſtance of the French King having attacked his Imperial Majeſty's dominions in

* Collection of Treaties Vol. 1 p. 256.

Charles had uniformly, though ſecretly, acted as the inſtrument of Louis XIV. in contradiction to the reſolutions of Parliament; which, in 1678, offered to raiſe money by a poll, to enable the King to declare war againſt France; and aſſigned, as its motive, the preventing Louis XIV. from making farther encroachments on the Spaniſh Netherlands; and at the ſame time it prohibited the importation of French Wines, &c.

James II. in 1686, the firſt of his reign, though he had, in the end of the preceeding year, formed an alliance with the States, yet concluded the treaty above mentioned.

† Collection of Treaties Vol. 1. p. 256

‡ Declaration publiſhed at Bruſſels.

the

the Netherlands, as well as thoſe of the States General. The contracting parties agreed not to lay down their arms, till a peace could be obtained, on the footing of the treaties of Weſtphalia, of Oſnaburg, Munſter, and the Pyrenees.*

1697.—The war continued to this period, when the treaty of Ryſwick† was formed, between England and France; ſoon afterwards, at the ſame place, the treaty between France and Holland; in the ſame year alſo, that between Spain and France, and between the Emperor and France.‡

1700.—The treaty between France, Great Britain, and the States General was formed, for ſettling the ſucceſſion to the Crown of Spain.§

1701.—So little was the faith of France to be depended upon, and ſo obvious the intentions of

* The treaty was ſigned at Vienna May 12th, 1689, and acceded to by Britain December 9th of the ſame year. See Collection of Treaties Vol. 1. p. 286.

† The firſt partition treaty.

‡ Collection of Treaties, Vol. 1. p. 407.

It was at this period, agreed, that the Crown of Spain ſhould paſs to a branch of the Bourbon family, and the Low Countries to Auſtria.

§ The ſecond partition treaty.

Collection of Treaties, Vol. 1. p. 407.

Louis XIV. to make farther conqueſts in the Netherlands, and on the German empire, ſituated on the French ſide of the Rhine, that the ſecond grand alliance between the Emperor, England, and Holland was ſettled, with the avowed object, on the part of the Emperor, of ſtopping the progreſs of the French in both theſe lines of conqueſt, and of England and Holland, of preſerving the Low Countries, which the former conſidered, in the hands of France, to be inconſiſtent with its maritime power and commerce, and the latter, with its independence*.

1702.—The death of King William, at this juncture, did not alter the ſyſtem of defence againſt the encroachments of France; on the one hand, the object of the Emperor was, to aſſert the rights of the Houſe of Auſtria to the crown of Spain and the Netherlands, on the other, that of England and Holland was, by protecting the confines of the German empire and the Netherlands, to preſerve the trade and navy of Great Britain and of Holland, from the attacks of France, or Spain in the Narrow Seas †.

1709.—The victories of the Duke of Marlborough led to the treaty of the Hague, ſigned the

* Collection of Treaties, 1785, Vol. 1. p. 326.

† General Collection of Treaties, Vol. 3 & 4.

29th

29th of October, or what has been termed, by way of diſtinction, the Barrier Treaty, in which the preliminary articles to the treaties of a general peace were agreed upon, between the allies and France*.

1713.—After the fall of the Whig Miniſters of Queen Anne, and the introduction of their opponents, notwithſtanding the conqueſts of Marlborough, the Peace of Utrecht was agreed on, which left France in poſſeſſion of the principal barrier towns, in what has been termed French Flanders, reſerving however, a conſiderable barrier in the Netherlands to the Dutch.

1714.—The Emperor, by the treaty of Raſtadt, acquieſced in that of Utrecht, and by the treaty of Baden, the Emperor and the Empire acceded to it.

1715.—The acceſſion of George I. reſtored the politics of King William, the great object

* As all the arguments for and againſt this treaty, drawn up by Lord Townſend and Mr. Poyntz, apply with equal force to the ſubſequent treaties, which proceeded upon this of 1709, we ſhall throw them into the form of general obſervations, at the concluſion of the period we are reviewing.

of

of which and of the Whig intereſt had been, to check the growing power of France on the ſide of the Netherlands and of Germany, or in other words, to maintain a balance of power between that monarchy, England, Holland and the Empire. Upon this principle, the treaty of Antwerp was formed, with the Emperor Charles VI. to maintain the proteſtant ſucceſſion to the crown of England, and to procure the reſtitution of the Spaniſh Netherlands to the Emperor, with a reſerve of a ſtrong barrier in them to the Dutch.

1716.—A treaty of mutual defence, upon the ſame principle, was concluded between the Emperor Charles VI. and George I.

1718.—A convention was held between the Emperor, Great Britain, Spain and the United Provinces, for the explanation and execution of certain articles of the barrier treaty 1709.

1731.—A treaty of peace and alliance was formed, between the Emperor, George II. and the United Provinces, upon the baſis of the treaty of Utrecht.

1748.—The treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, between Britain, France, and the States General, proceeded

proceeded upon the ſame principle, reciting the treaty of Weſtphalia as its baſis.

1763.—Though Auſtria had taken part with France, in the war which preceded the treaty of Paris of this year, and though, of courſe, the barrier of the Netherlands, and the treaties with the Dutch remained entire, yet, in ſo far as regarded theſe important objects, the treaty proceeded upon the baſis of that of Utrecht, of that of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748, and of that of Weſtphalia.

1783.—Notwithſtanding the part which Holland took with France, in aſſiſting the Britiſh colonies in America, yet the treaty of general peace, in this year, with both countries, proceeded upon the baſis of that of Utrecht, that of Aix-la-Chapelle, that of Paris, and that of Weſtphalia.

1788.—The defenſive alliance between Britain and the States General referred to the ſame treaties.

1793.—A convention was made between Britain and Pruſſia, for the purpoſe of recovering the territories which France had conquered,

or

or might conquer, from the Allies of either Power.*

1794.—A treaty to the ſame effect was made between theſe Powers, ſpecifying a ſubſidy to be paid to Pruſſia, with the ſame objects of checking the further encroachments of France; and, at the ſame time, a treaty between Britain and the States General, ſpecifying the proportion of the ſubſidy which each Power was to pay.†

1795.—After Pruſſia had broken its engagements, ſtipulated in the preceding treaties, a convention was made between Britain and the Emperor of Germany, by which the former guaranteed a loan raiſed by the latter, to enable the contracting Powers to recover the conqueſts made by France.‡

Since the date of this convention, offenſive and defenſive alliances againſt France, for the purpoſe of reſtoring the liberties of Europe, have been formed by Britain, Auſtria, and Ruſſia, ſpecifying the contingent which each Power is to furniſh.

* See Treaty ſigned at Mayence, 14th July, 1793.
† Both Treaties ſigned at the Hague, 19th April, 1794.
‡ This Convention was ſigned at Vienna, 4th May, 1795.

Before

Before ſtating the inferences which the preceding treaties authoriſe, it may be proper to explain terms which have been unhappily warped with political prejudices, and therefore, in the preſent moment, ſeem to have become obſolete. Such are Barrier of the Netherlands, and Balance of Power in Europe.

By Barrier of the Netherlands, it is to be underſtood, that force, ſtationed in a line of fortifications, which has been required, in ſucceſſive ages, to prevent France from obtaining the command of the countries, from the Pyrenees to the German Ocean, and from the ancient limits of France to the Rhine. As this force could only be aſſembled, by the union of the ſovereigns of the countries, on the confines of France, aided by Britain and Holland, it has, and ever muſt be the intereſt of each and of the whole, to have it in readineſs, for preventing the aggrandizement of a power, the internal reſources of which, have been found equal to thoſe of the whole of the allies united.

By Balance of Power is meant, the combining the force of the nations ſurrounding France, in ſuch a manner, as to throw it into one ſcale, while that of France was placed in the other, ſo that the

independency of the contracting powers might be maintained.

A firſt inference, from the preceding treaties, ſeems to be;—that the conduct of France, in the conceſſions made by Louis XIV. in the Barrier Treaty, 1709, proceeded from the difficulty in which he found himſelf, in proſecuting the war; for the treaty had ſcarcely been ratified, when that Monarch renewed his ſcheme of conqueſt in the Low Countries, and obtained from the laſt Miniſters of Queen Anne, the terms which appear in the treaty of Utrecht;—that the Miniſters of Louis XV. followed up the politics of his predeceſſor, by fomenting rebellions in Great Britain, and by forming parties in Holland, to overturn the eſtabliſhed conſtitution; connecting with theſe meaſures the plan of ſeizing on the Britiſh ſettlements in America, and in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies;—And that the Miniſters of Louis XVI. proceeded upon the ſame politics, when they acknowledged the independence of America, till the approaching diſſolution of the French Monarchy, compelled them to recede, in 1787, from their plan of overturning the Dutch government, and of leaving the Auſtrian Netherlands only, between their own armies, on the one ſide, and the Dutch mal-contents,

tents, on the other. In illuſtration it may be recollected ;—

—That the peace of Utrecht obliged the Allies to accede to terms, by no means correſponding to the ſucceſs of the war which preceded the negociation ;—

—That the rebellion excited in Great Britain, in 1715, was not intended by France to ſecond the views of the Pretender, but to weaken Britain, and prevent it from acting in the Netherlands —

—That the war of 1744, which terminated in the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748, was a continuation of the ſame perfidious French politics; for, during this war, France leagued with Pruſſia for the purpoſe of diverting, by a war in the Empire, Auſtria from defending the Netherlands; and excited at the ſame time the rebellion of 1745 in Great Britain, to diſable England and Holland from giving effectual ſupport to the defence of the barrier ;—

—That the attack, in 1755, upon the Britiſh ſettlements in America, connected with the ſcheme of acquiring territorial power in India, and the invaſion of Germany, though the politics of France were the reverſe of what they had been, in the preceding war in regard to Auſtria, yet

proceeded upon the idea of depreſſing the power of Great Britain and its Allies, truſting to future negociations with the Imperial Court, for conceſſions on the ſide of Flanders;—

—That the peace of Paris, in 1763, having fruſtrated all thoſe ſchemes, the attempt was again renewed of weakening Britain, by aſſiſting her revolted colonies in 1777; a circumſtance which, while it drew on, firſt, the embarraſſment, and next, the fall of the Monarchy, did not check France, from an attempt to excite a revolution in Holland in 1787; ſo that while the power of the Monarchy remained, though leſſer political ſchemes might ſeem to mark its progreſs, the great and invariable object was the deſtruction of the barrier of the Netherlands, as the ſure means of deſtroying that balance of power, which had hitherto preſerved the independence of the European nations.

A ſecond inference, from theſe treaties, ſeems to be; that the politics of King William have been followed by his ſucceſſors, on the throne of England, of preſerving the Netherlands, not only as the barrier of the liberties of Europe, but as neceſſary for the ſafety of the Britiſh trade, and the ſuperiority of its naval power in the Narrow Seas.

In

In illuſtration, it may be recollected;—That the treaties which have been referred to, viz. that of Ryſwick in 1697; the partition treaty 1698; the treaty of alliance and the ſecond partition treaty in 1700; the treaty of alliance between the Emperor, Great Britain, and the States General; that between Great Britain, Denmark, and the States General in 1701, into which grand alliance Portugal was admitted in 1703; and the barrier treaty 1709, all proceeded upon the ſame grounds; and that the treaties made ſince this laſt period, for maintaining the independency of the European nations, admit of the following defences, as offered by Lord Townſend and Mr. Poyntz, for the Barrier Treaty;—

—That they were neceſſary, becauſe they ſecured the Proteſtant ſucceſſion to the throne of Britain, and the conſtitution eſtabliſhed by the Revolution, without leſſening the independency of the crown of Great Britain;—

—That they were neceſſary, becauſe it was the true intereſt of Britain, in particular, both in a political and commercial view, to have a barrier againſt the encroachments of France, on the ſide of the Netherlands; and for Britain, Auſtria, and Holland, in common, that the protection of this barrier

barrier ſhould be entruſted, more immediately, to the Dutch, becauſe their political and commercial intereſts were involved in its preſervation; and becauſe, by this ſyſtem of the defence of a diſtant poſſeſſion, Germany had a ſtrong outwork to the frontier of the empire, and Britain an equally ſtrong outwork to its commerce in the Narrow Seas.

The treaty of Utrecht in 1713, as has already been mentioned, proceeded from the Tory Miniſtry of Queen Anne; but George I. had no ſooner aſcended the throne of England, than he followed up the politics of King William, reſpecting France; hence the treaty of 1715 between the Emperor, Spain, Great Britain, and the United Provinces; hence the convention and treaty of alliance of 1718, for the execution of the articles of the barrier treaty, hence the treaty between Great Britain, the Emperor and Holland in 1731, and the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, and hence the definitive treaty between England, France and Spain in 1763.

It is difficult to account for the conduct of France, of Holland, and of Spain, in the treaties with America, which they formed againſt Britain, in the war which terminated in 1783, in any other way, in

in ſo far as reſpects France, than as a continuation of the ſcheme of humbling Britain, as the only power which could prevent that plan of conqueſt and aggrandizement in Europe, which we have ſeen marking the conduct of that country for three centuries; and in ſo far as regards Holland and Spain, but as the harbinger of that ruin which has overtaken the one, and of that apathy and humiliation which is foreboding of the fate of the other.

A third inference, or rather chain of inferences from theſe treaties, ſeems to be;—

That by the convention between England and France in 1787, the conſtitution of the United Netherlands was reſtored, and the barrier of Auſtrian Flanders preſerved;—

—That in 1789, when the French monarchy fell, Auſtria, from affinity to the devoted family which had been dethroned, and all Europe, from horror at the ſeries of crimes in France, conſidered the conduct of that people to be as atrocious, as it was new in the hiſtory of mankind;—

—That Great Britain did not interfere, even while the French armies over-ran the barrier of the Netherlands, till ſuch time as the new Republic

public had avowed its intention, and actually began offenſive meaſures againſt Holland ;—

That the opinion of the Britiſh Nation and of Parliament was almoſt unanimous for active meaſures, to check the conqueſts of France, will be admitted. For though France had changed its form of government, it ſteadily perſevered in its plan of adding to the French dominions, the Netherlands from Dunkirk to the German Ocean ; extending its limits on the ſide of Rouſſillon and Catalonia, and making the Rhine its frontier towards Germany ; poſſeſſions, which at once would give to it the command of the navigation of that river, and of the Scheldt and the Maeſe, would ſtretch its frontier towards Italy, beyond the Alps, would give it the command of the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, and thus deſtroy that balance of power, by which the independence of the European nations has hitherto been maintained.

PART III.

Review of the Treaties which have eſtabliſhed the commercial Intercourſe of Great Britain with the Netherlands, and thrown the Balance of Trade in its favor.

CONTENTS.

Commercial Treaties arranged according to their effects on the political Situation of Great Britain—Commercial Treaties between Flanders and England—Firſt Inference from theſe Treaties—Hiſtorical illuſtrations of it—Second Inference—Hiſtorical illuſtrations—Commercial Treaties between Great Britain and Holland—Commercial Intercourſe between the Dutch and Scotch Nations;—Commercial Treaties between Great Britain and Holland continued—Firſt Inference, with Illuſtrations—Second Inference, with Illuſtrations.

HAVING, in the introduction to the preceding branch of this reſearch, detailed the leading facts, in the hiſtory of the ſovereignties which were the parties in the following commercial treaties, it is

here only neceſſary to arrange them, as they were more or leſs of importance to Great Britain.

Under this principle, we ſhall firſt mark the general characters of the commercial treaties with Flanders and Holland; and next draw the inferences which theſe treaties authorize, both as they regard the trade of Europe, and the balance of trade with the Netherlands which has hitherto been in favor of Great Britain.

FLANDERS.

The feudal governments of Europe had no ſooner begun to encourage the uſeful arts, by granting privileges, for certain ſubſidies, to the towns which had become ſeats of trade, than the Netherlands, from their relative ſituation to Germany, France, and Britain, and to the countries bordering on the Baltic, became an emporium.

Antwerp, ſituated on a navigable river, and Bruges, on the confines of France, were the principal trading towns of the Netherlands and members of the Hanſeatic League. The vicinity of the coaſts of the Netherlands to thoſe of England produced, at a very early period, a profitable intercourſe

intercourſe between them, to confirm which, reciprocal privileges were conferred by the ſovereigns of both countries.

1274—Edward I. of England, formed a commercial alliance with Guy Earl of Flanders, a tranſaction the more memorable, from its having brought the Flemiſh artificers in woollens to reſort to England, and from its having given to our ſtaple a decided ſuperiority.*

1338.—Edward III. of England formed a treaty with the Earl of Flanders, by which the ſtaple of Engliſh wool was fixed at Bruges, to the mutual advantage of the Engliſh and Flemiſh merchants. This treaty was followed by frequent conventions between the two countries, affording mutual privileges to the inhabitants; ſuch as fiſhing on each other's coaſts, &c.†

* Rymer's Fœdera, vol. ii. p. 32.

† Ibid. vol. v. p. 38.

Antwerp had, by this time, eſtabliſhed its trade with the Italian republics of Venice and Genoa, by which it exported the wool of England, manufactured in Flanders, to the Mediterranean, and imported the produce of the Eaſt-Indies, to be diffuſed over the north of Europe. Anderſon's Hiſtory of Commerce, vol. i. p. 341.

1411.—Henry IV. of England formed a treaty of commerce with the Duke of Burgundy, as Earl of Flanders, "being deſirous of the good "continuation of the ſaid commerce, for the com-"mon utility of our ſaid kingdom, and our other "dominions."*

1446.—Henry VI. of England formed a treaty of commerce with Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, by which the ancient intercourſe between England and Flanders was prolonged for twelve years. In this treaty, the inhabitants of Ghent, Ypres, and other towns of Brabant were included.†

1467.—A treaty ſtill more explicit was made between Edward IV of England and the Duke of Burgundy, with ſimilar objects, and to continue in force for thirty years.‡

1495.—A treaty of peace and intercourſe was made between Henry VII. and Philip, Archduke of Auſtria and Earl of Flanders,

* Rymer's Fœdera, vol. viii. p. 687.

The Duke of Burgundy, in this treaty, acted with permiſſion of the French King, as his liege Lord, not however of Flanders, but of Burgundy.

† Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xi. p. 140.

‡ Ibid. vol. xi. p. 591.

by

by which it was ſtipulated, that the ſubjects of both ſtates ſhould have reciprocal privileges of trade in all commodities, ſubject only to the duties and cuſtoms which had been paid during the laſt fifty years.* This tranſaction was followed by leſſer conventions between the two countries, explaining the reciprocal privileges of the merchants in each. The inhabitants of the Netherlands conſidered the regulations in this treaty to be of ſo much importance to them, that they termed it the *intercurſus magnus*.

1499.—Henry VII. renewed this treaty, and obtained, for his ſubjects, the privilege of exporting woollens to any part of the Netherlands, as they had formerly had the privilege of doing to Bruges and to Antwerp only.†

1506.—Henry obtained farther advantages in the Netherlands from Philip, King of Spain.

* Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 578, and Collection of Treaties, vol. ii. p. 1.

† Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 711.

It was at the cloſe of the fifteenth century, that America and the paſſage by the Cape of Good Hope were diſcovered, a circumſtance which changed the line of commerce in Europe; and which, independently of the revolution in the Netherlands, towards the end of the ſixteenth century, would have materially injured the trade of Antwerp.

This

This treaty from its bringing no new privileges to the Flemiſh Merchants, was termed, *intercurſus malus*.*

1520.—Henry VIII, renewed the treaty 1495, and had it eſtabliſhed, that the Engliſh merchants ſhould enjoy a free trade in the Netherlands, in all manner of merchandize, and ſhould not pay any other duties than thoſe eſtabliſhed by the treaty 1446†.

1528.—A truce was agreed on between England, France, and the Emperor; among the ſtipulations of which, was a freedom of fiſhing on the coaſts of both countries, and new exemptions to the Engliſh trade in the Netherlands; theſe privileges were to extend to the Spaniſh iſlands in the Mediterranean, and to the Engliſh iſlands ſituated near its coaſts‡.

1578.—Queen Elizabeth formed her firſt treaty with the Dutch, or States-General of the United Netherlands. The commercial object of this wiſe Princeſs was equally to check the growing power of Spain and France, while through

* Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xiii. p. 132.

† Ibid. p. 714.

‡ Ibid. Vol. xiv. p. 258.

Holland

Holland and Zealand ſhe kept open the trade of her ſubjects with Germany.*

During the civil wars, the commercial intercourſe with Flanders was interrupted and abridged.—From revenge for the aſſiſtance given the Dutch, the Spaniſh governors, ſometimes by proclamations, prohibited the importation of Engliſh cloths and merchandize; at other times, they allowed theſe articles to be imported, but under ſevere reſtrictions and duties. The Queen, by ſeeming to take part with Spain, wherever its intereſt was oppoſed to France, got temporary privileges for her ſubjects in the Netherlands, and by ſeeming to take a different line, in French Flanders, ſhe kept open the Engliſh trade with France.

1604.—A treaty was ſettled at London, between James I. and Philip III. King of Spain, and the Archduke and Ducheſs, Albert and Iſabella, by which the merchants of each of theſe countries regained their ancient privileges, upon the payment of the old eſtabliſhed duties†.

* Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xv. p. 784.

† Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xvi. p. 579.

This is the firſt Engliſh treaty, in which we find the privileges of the Scotch merchants, in the Netherlands, mentioned.

1630.—Charles I. formed the treaty of Madrid with Philip IV. of Spain, by which the privileges of the merchants of England, Spain, and the Netherlands, under certain reſtrictions, were confirmed*.

1667.—Charles II. formed a treaty with Spain, in which, Article XX. regards the Netherlands, and is in the following terms:—"And to "the end that all impediments be taken away, "and that the merchants and adventurers of the "kingdoms of Great-Britain be permitted to "return to Brabant, Flanders, and other the "provinces of the Low-Countries, under the ju-"riſdiction of the King of Spain; foraſmuch as "it hath been thought convenient that all and "any the laws, edicts, and acts, by which the "importation of cloth, or any other woollen "manufactures of what kind ſoever, dyed or un-"dyed, milled or unmilled, into Flanders or "other provinces, hath been prohibited, be re-

mentioned.—Collection of Treaties publiſhed in 1732, vol. ii. p. 131—146.

* Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xix. p. 219.

From this treaty it would appear, that the object of Philip was to detach Charles from his connection with the Dutch, as Spain did not finally acknowledge the independence of the States till the treaty of Munſter, 1648.

"voked

" voked and annulled; and that if any right,
" tribute, impoſition, charge, or money, hath
" been, with permiſſion or otherwiſe, put upon
" cloths, or any of the aforeſaid woollen manu-
" factures ſo imported, (except the ancient tri-
" bute upon every piece of cloth, and propor-
" tionably upon every other woollen manufac-
" ture, agreeable to the ancient treaties and agree-
" ments between the then Kings of England, and
" the Dukes of Burgundy and Governors of the
" Low-Countries,) the ſame ſhall be altogether
" void; and no ſuch tribute or impoſition from
" henceforth impoſed or put upon the ſaid cloths
" or manufactures, for any cauſe or pretext what-
" ſoever.—And that all the Engliſh merchants,
" trading in any of the ſaid provinces, ſhould
" enjoy all the privileges, exemptions, immuni-
" ties, and benefits, which formerly have been
" agreed and given by the aforeſaid ancient trea-
" ties and agreements, between the then Kings of
" England and the Dukes of Burgundy and Go-
" vernors of the Low-Countries, &c.*"

1713.—A convention, for a proviſional regulation of trade in the Netherlands, was concluded at Utrecht†.

* Chalmers's Treaties, vol. ii. p. 16.

† Ibid. vol. i. p. 205.

1715.—Upon a complaint by the Britiſh Miniſter, that the Engliſh commerce in the Netherlands was obſtructed by the high duties laid upon coarſe woollen cloths, the Imperial Miniſter, for the barrier at Antwerp, conſented to the reduction of theſe duties, but in all other reſpects inſiſted, that the commerce of Britain with the Auſtrian Netherlands ſhould remain under the exiſting regulations, till the two powers could agree upon a treaty of commerce.

This convention was further explained by an agreement, in which the States General were included; and it was ſtipulated, that the goods of Engliſh merchants paſſing through the Dutch Netherlands into the Auſtrian, and *vice verſa*, ſhould pay no other duties than upon the then footing, and that no alteration ſhould be made, until it ſhould be otherwiſe appointed by a treaty of commerce, to be negociated as ſoon as poſſible.

Though in the defenſive alliance, 1716, in the quadruple alliance, 1718, and in the convention between Britain, the Emperor, and the States General, of the ſame year, commercial articles, regarding the trade of the Auſtrian Netherlands are referred to; and though in the treaty of Vienna, 1731, the Oſtend Eaſt-India Company, at the requiſition

requiſition of Britain, was ſuppreſſed, it does not appear that any farther ſteps of importance were taken, to ſettle regulations for the trade between England and the Netherlands, till the year 1737, when Commiſſioners were appointed on the part of the Emperor, England and Holland, to meet at Antwerp, for the purpoſe of framing commercial regulations. They continued their deliberations from this time to 1742, when the death of the Emperor, Charles VI. terminated the conference. In the various projects and ſchemes propoſed by the Commiſſioners of the Emperor, for eſtabliſhing the tariffs of England and Holland, for goods in their tranſit through Auſtrian Flanders, and for placing the trade upon the footing of ancient treaties, nothing deciſive could be done, becauſe the Dutch Commiſſioners ſought only to gain time and to raiſe difficulties.

1752—Commiſſioners were again appointed to open a conference at Bruſſels, and with ſimilar objects. This conference continued for ſome months, but as the Dutch and Engliſh Commiſſioners demanded the entire execution of the barrier treaty, viz. the payment of the ſubſidies due to Holland,

and the reduction of the duties to the ancient tariff, it terminated in March 1753.

No further negociation appears to have been opened, reſpecting the trade between England and the Auſtrian Netherlands, ſo that it remained upon the footing of the ancient treaties, as they were explained by the treaty with Spain, 1667, and continued by the treaty, 1715.

From theſe treaties, a firſt inference ſeems to be;—that the Auſtrian Netherlands, ſince the earlieſt period of commerce in Europe, have been conſidered, by all neighbouring nations, to be a valuable inlet to trade, and a coaſt which could have ſent fleets to diſpute with England the command of the Narrow Seas; and that the trade of England, particularly in its ſtaple of woollens, has maintained its markets in Flanders and the countries bordering upon it, by means of the privileges which its merchants enjoyed in the Netherlands, both before the ſhutting up of the Scheldt, and ſince that period, through that branch of the Maeſe which has its openings towards Zealand and Holland.

In illuſtration it may be obſerved;—That Antwerp, in 1560, about eighteen years before

before the revolution in the Dutch Netherlands, had ſix claſſes of merchants, viz. Germans, Danes and Eaſterlings, (meaning emigrants from the ſhores of the Baltic, from Denmark to Livonia) Italians, Spaniards, Engliſh, and Portugueſe. The rate of intereſt in the time of Charles V. and Philip II. was 12 per cent. Guicciardini, in his hiſtory, enumerates the articles of trade from Antwerp to all of theſe countries, which bore a full proportion to what our authors aſcribe to London, at that time. Armuyden, in the iſland of Walcheren, which was the port of rendezvous for the ſhipping of Antwerp had, according to this authority, often 500 ſhips in its harbour. He concludes with enumerating the different claſſes of its artizans and manufacturers, a circumſtance which ſeems to have led De Witt, in his intereſts of Holland, to inſtitute a compariſon between the commerce of Antwerp and of Amſterdam;—

—That when the Duke of Alva in 1576 impriſoned the Magiſtrates of Antwerp, and forced the inhabitants to take up arms, he almoſt ruined the trade of this great city;—That when the Duke of Parma, in 1585, beſieged and took Antwerp, plundered it for three days, of more than three millions

millions of piſtoles, beſides an equal value of merchandize, put to the ſword more than three thouſand of its inhabitants, while an equal number were either trodden to death, or drowned in the Scheldt, its trade was finally deſtroyed. This circumſtance forced the greateſt part of its manufacturers in ſilk, damaſks, taffaties, bayes, ſays, ſerges, ſtockings, &c. to ſettle in England, while others of them fled to Amſterdam and the Hanſe-Towns; events which rapidly raiſed the Engliſh trade, and gave to its ſtaple that ſuperiority, in the markets of Europe, which it has hitherto maintained.*

A ſecond inference ſeems to be;—that after the eſtabliſhment of the Dutch, as an independent power, and the ſhutting up of the Scheldt, the Auſtrian Netherlands ceaſed to be an emporium, farther than that its produce conſtantly contributed to exchanges with Holland, England, and France; hence it became, in a commercial as well as in a political view, the intereſt of England to ſupport the Dutch, whoſe country had become equally the depôt of the Britiſh merchants, furniſhing the markets of Germany,

* Anderſon's Hiſtory of Commerce, vol. ii. p. 15.

and

and a maritime power, able to prevent France from ſending fleets into the Narrow Seas;—It next became the intereſt of the Dutch, becauſe their trade depended upon the preceding circumſtance, as well as their independence, on the armies which Auſtria and England could ſend into Flanders to maintain that valuable barrier;—It laſtly became the intereſt of Auſtria and of the Empire, becauſe, by poſſeſſing Flanders, they could derive reſources from England and from Holland, to enable their armies to attack the northern frontier of France, and could ſtop the progreſs of that ambitious power, on the ſkirts of the empire bordering on the Rhine.

In illuſtration it may be obſerved;—That the comparative ſtate of the trade of London and Antwerp, before the fall of the latter city, and the comparative ſtate of the trade of London and Amſterdam ſince that period, diſcover the reſources which the Low Countries can afford, for the formation of a navy; and that in the poſſeſſion of a ſeparate power, the natural alliance muſt be with Britain, both to exclude the French from the commerce, between the Low Countries and Germany, and between them and the Baltic. If France ſhall acquire the coaſts

of

of the Netherlands, it can cut off the reſources, which have hitherto enabled England, Holland, and Germany, by the treaties enumerated in the preceding part, to preſerve the balance of power in Europe, and England the balance of trade with the Netherlands, in its own favor;—

—That it has been the invariable policy of France, from the period of Francis I. to the preſent moment, to make a conqueſt of the Auſtrian Netherlands, foreſeeing that if this object could be attained, both Holland and Germany muſt fall an eaſy prey to its armies; that the former would loſe the moſt valuable branch of its trade, viz. ſupplying Germany by the navigation of the Maeſe and the Rhine; and that the latter would loſe its beſt reſources, from its communication with England being at an end. Hence in all the wars, particularly thoſe of Louis XIV. France readily gave up ſuperior foreign advantages, for apparently inferior acquiſitions, on the borders of the Rhine, and on the ſide of Flanders.

HOLLAND.

The provinces which, by the revolution in the Low-Countries, 1579, threw off their dependency

dency upon Philip II. had, anterior to this æra, poſſeſſed a ſhare of the trade to Britain, and to the north of Germany. As each of theſe provinces had been ſubject to their own Counts, Princes, and Biſhops, each had its own particular form of government, though, as a country, they were connected with the German Empire, by a ſpecies of indirect feudal tenure.

This connexion did not prevent the ſovereign of each of the provinces, from forming treaties of commerce with England, Scotland, and the Powers of the North, which the vicinity of theſe ccountries rendered mutually neceſſary and advantageous.

1325.—Edward II. formed a convention with William Earl of Holland, for preventing diſputes relating to commerce, and depredations on the high ſeas.*

1337.—Edward III. allowed the export of wool, which hitherto had been ſent to Flanders only, to paſs to Dutch Brabant.†

* Rymer's Fœdera, vol. iv. p. 179.

† Anderſon's Hiſtory of Commerce, vol. i. p. 305. upon the authority of Barnes's Hiſtory of Edward III.

1438.—Henry VI. formed a commercial treaty with the Earls of Holland, Zealand, and Friesland.*

1608.—James I. formed a defensive and commercial treaty with the States General.†

1654.—A treaty was formed between Oliver Cromwell and the States, restoring the commercial intercourse between the two countries.‡

1667-8.—A treaty of commerce was formed between Great Britain and Holland by Charles II. which nearly restored the privileges of the two nations to the footing of the former treaties.§

1674.—Charles II. at the request of his Parliament, renewed his treaty of commerce with Holland, at Westminster, and the Marine Treaty,

* Rymer's Fœdera, vol. x. p. 713.

† Ibid. vol. xvi. p. 667.

‡ Thurloe's State Papers, vol. ii. p. 266—280.

—It was by this treaty that the privileges of the British flag were first recognized.

§ Chalmer's Treaties, vol. i. p. 124.

—It was while this treaty was pending, that the Dutch, under de Ruyter, took the advantage of Charles's misplaced confidence, landed at Sheerness, blew up the fort, and destroyed a part of the English fleet.

as

as it has been termed, between England and the States, by which the privileges of trade were renewed, and the privileges of the Britiſh flag in the Narrow Seas recognized.*

1689.—King William and the States General entered into a treaty of alliance and commerce, againſt France, the object of which was, to force Louis XIV. to equitable terms of commercial intercourſe, in order that the trade of both nations, particularly in the Narrow Seas, might be exempted from the interferences of France. This treaty led to that of the grand alliance, concluded the ſame year.

As the union with Scotland took place, before any further commercial treaties, between England and Holland, were formed it may be proper to take a retroſpect of the commercial relations ſubſiſting, between Scotland and the Low Countries, before the privileges of both kingdoms were concentrated.

So early as the beginning of the fourteenth century, the Scotch had a conſiderable commercial intercourſe with the Low Countries. Edward II. before the invaſion of Scotland, applied to the

* Chalmers's Treaties, vol. i. p. 125.

Earl of Flanders, to aboliſh the Scotch privileges, but received for anſwer, "that the country of "Flanders was common to all the world."* The Scotch trade with the Netherlands, of courſe, continued to encreaſe, and in 1444 James I. of Scotland removed its ſtaple from Bruges in Flanders, to Campveere in Zealand.†

In 1503, by an act of the Scotch Parliament, the office of conſervator of the Scotch privileges in the Low Countries was eſtabliſhed. This Magiſtrate, with four Scotch merchants, were to be judges in all mercantile caſes, between the merchants of Scotland in the Netherlands. The conſervators court, therefore, had an independent juriſdiction, a right which the Scotch have enjoyed, till the late ſubjugation of Zealand by the French.

1709—By the ſeparate articles in the treaty of the Hague, the commercial intercourſe with the Dutch was continued.

1716.—A treaty between Great Britain and

* Rymer's Fœdera, vol. iii. p. 771.

† Anderſon's Hiſtory of Commerce, vol. i. p. 467, on the authority of *Grande Chroniqne de Hollande, Zelande, &c.*

This event took place, when James I. of Scotland married his daughter Mary to Wolfred van Borſelen, Lord of Veere.

the

the States General, for renewing former alliances and conventions, was formed, and in 1718 the convention between the Emperor, Great Britain, and the States, was held with the ſame object.

1731.—The preceding treaties were ſtill farther ratified, by that at Vienna, and more fully explained, by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748.

1784.—The treaty of Verſailles included the confirmation of the commercial privileges of the Dutch and Engliſh, which were farther ratified by the treaty of the Hague, 1788.*

As a firſt inference, it follows;—that while the Netherlands were under the dominion of Charles V. and Philip II. it was the intereſt of Britain to maintain its commercial intercourſe with that country, by a conduct, which kept in balance the power of France and of the Emperor, but after the riſe of the Dutch power, it became the obvious intereſt both of Britain and of the States General, to conſider Flanders, not only as a barrier againſt the encroachments of France, but a barrier alſo againſt that monarchy having acceſs through the Maeſe to the trade to Germany, and to that to the north of Europe.

* Chalmers's Treaties, vol. i. p. 128.

No illuſtration ſeems neceſſary farther than a reference to the treaties which have been enumerated, and to the ſucceſſive efforts which Britain has made, for the demolition of Dunkirk, as the only ſea-port which afforded the French opportunities of haraſſing her coaſting and north ſea trade; hence, the repeated guarantees of Flanders, both by England and Holland, as a poſſeſſion of Auſtria; and hence the efforts of that power to maintain a territory which connected it ſo intimately, with the reſources and ſafety of the maritime powers.

As a ſecond inference, it follows;—that if France ſhall obtain from Auſtria the poſſeſſion of Flanders, and if Holland become a dependency of France not only will all the commercial advantages, which the preceding treaties have for ages ſecured, be finally loſt, but it will be in the power of France to monopolize the trade by the Maeſe, and the Zuyder-Zee to Germany; and to form as powerful a navy in the North Seas, as ſhe has hitherto poſſeſſed in the Channel; Hence if France ſhall fortify the coaſts of the Netherlands with garriſons only, ſhe can protect her new, as ſhe has done her ancient coaſts, ſend her cruizers from the Scheldt and the Maeſe to diſtreſs our trade, and have her formidable armies in a ſituation to invade Britain and Ireland, or to over-run and ſubvert the German Empire and the ſtates of Italy.

PART IV.

Political Effects which neceſſarily would reſult from the former Balance of Power in Europe being deſtroyed, contraſted with Conjectures, reſpecting the political Effects which would follow; from another Balance of Power being eſtabliſhed that may be analogous to it.

CONTENTS.

Arrangement of the political Effects, in the actual Situation of Affairs in Europe, if the old Balance of Power ſhall be deſtroyed—State of it previouſly to the preſent War—Different and unequal Efforts of the European Nations to ſupport and to maintain it—By Treaties—By a general War—Conſequences to Europe, if France ſhould retain its Conqueſts, or ſhould be hemmed in within its former Limits—Conſequences to Europe from the Reſtoration of the former Balance of Power—To France—To the Powers who ſtill are Parties in the War—To the Powers which have receded from the War—Conjectures on the Formation of a new Balance of Power that may be analogous to the former.

IN

IN the firſt Part of this Reſearch, a retroſpect was taken of the hiſtorical events which produced the balance of power in Europe, and eſtabliſhed it as a ſyſtem upon which independent nations have proceeded, in maintaining their mutual relations. Events, during the preſent war, have in part overturned that ſyſtem, ſo that at this criſis, we have, from the preceding claſſes of evidence, to reaſon to the effects which neceſſarily muſt reſult, from an eſtabliſhed political ſyſtem being abandoned, or from efforts being made for its reſtoration.

With this object, we ſhall firſt refer to the arrangements made by the European nations to ſettle a balance of political power, previouſly to the opening of the preſent war.

When Louis XIV. had conſolidated the French monarchy, he projected conqueſts on the ſide of the Rhine, and in Flanders. The leading powers in Germany, and the maritime powers began to be alarmed at encroachments, which

which threatened the ſubverſion of the liberties of Europe: hence the treaties which led to the general alliances for ſtopping the progreſs of his arms, and for balancing the power which the concentrated ſituation of France, its immenſe reſources, and the able politics of the miniſters of that Prince, enabled him to employ.

Holland, in a particular manner, guided by the foreſight and talents of King William, and England (alarmed equally at the rapid encreaſe of the French navy, and at the conqueſts in Flanders, which menaced the extinction of her coaſting and Baltic trade, notwithſtanding the civil war in which ſhe had been plunged, and the ſecret influence of the French Miniſters with the unfortunate Houſe of Stuart) entered into alliances with the German Princes, to oppoſe the encroachments of ſo dangerous a neighbour. It was not, however, till the revolution in England, which eſtabliſhed the influence of King William, over the two maritime nations, that this political balance was placed in equilibrium, or that the plan of defence was adopted, which, in the wars of Queen Anne, humbled the power of France, and afforded independence to the nations who oppoſed that monarchy.

After the peace of Utrecht, which proceeded, in ſo far as regarded Germany, upon the treaty of Weſtphalia,* and in ſo far as regarded the maritime powers, upon that of the Hague, by which the poſſeſſion of Auſtrian Flanders, as the barrier of Holland, and of the navigation of the Narrow Seas, had been guaranteed, Europe continued for thirty years, upon one uniform ſyſtem, viz. France acted under the family compact with Spain; and the maritime powers, in connexion with the German Empire, acted by conſolidating thoſe political relations, which the treaty of Weſtphalia had enabled them to form; neither party conſidering it prudent to involve Europe in wars, which at the beſt could only bring them to the points from which they had ſet out.

Between the years 1740 and 1750, new ſchemes of aggrandizement in America, the Weſt-Indies and Eaſt-Indies, began in France to aſſume a dangerous aſpect to the maritime powers. The reſources, which the French had drawn from their Weſt-India Iſlands and from their American poſſeſ-

* It was this treaty which aſcertained the reciprocal relations and connexions of the Princes of the Empire.

ſions,

ſions, induced the Miniſters of Louis XV. to meditate ſchemes of conqueſt in thoſe quarters, and the revolutions in the Mogul Empire, opened to Dupleix, the French Governor of Pondicherry, ſchemes ſtill more vaſt in India. France thus hoped to give employment to Britain, in the protection of her diſtant colonies and trade, and to diſable her from affording effectual aid to the powers on the continent of Europe; new acceſſions might therefore be eaſily obtained on the ſide of Flanders and Germany, or new reſources might flow in from the ſubjugation of the Britiſh Weſt-India Iſlands and American Colonies; and from a new empire in the Eaſt.

Holland, from the death of King William to this juncture, had remained inactive in the politics of Europe, but had been menaced by a French faction, endeavouring to extinguiſh the Stadtholderſhip of the Orange family; though to that family, and to this office, the Dutch owed their political exiſtence.

Events during this war afforded a new opening to the ambitious views of France reſpecting Germany. Pruſſia, under the Great Frederick, had become a rival to the Houſe of

Auſtria, and therefore ſeconded the views of France, that he might more effectually oppoſe Auſtria, and obtain poſſeſſions in Sileſia, to which he had hitherto only ſet up a doubtful claim.

The war, however, cloſed by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748. The intereſts of France and Spain in the Weſt-Indies and in America, as well as thoſe of Britain, returned to their former level, while Pruſſia obtained the only advantage, by becoming poſſeſſed of a part of Sileſia, and Auſtria and Holland obtained nothing more than a ratification of the barrier treaty.

The ſcheme of France to obtain power in the Weſt-Indies and America, and with it an increaſe of reſources, ſtill continued, and events in the Eaſt-Indies opened to them a more promiſing proſpect, both of cutting off a valuable part of the Britiſh reſources, and of obtaining an empire in India.

Having profited from foſtering the jealouſy between Auſtria and Pruſſia, France ſtill ſaw important advantages in Europe, by exciting againſt each other theſe rival powers in Germany. Withdrawing therefore its connexion from Pruſſia, it formed

formed a combination with Auſtria, by which it was to raiſe that power to be paramount in Germany, and to leave Flanders untouched, while, at the ſame time, it was to attack the Pruſſian and Hanoverian dominions, and thus be at liberty to puſh its conqueſts, in the Weſt and Eaſt Indies, at the very time, when, by its partiſans in Holland, it was cutting off from Britain its old maritime ally.

In theſe ambitious projects, however, the talents of the King of Pruſſia diſappointed France in Germany; while the equally great talents of Lord Chatham drove them from the Continent of America, and wreſted equally from France and Spain a valuable part of their ſettlements in the Weſt Indies and America.

Inſtead of France acquiring an empire in the Eaſt Indies, Britain, by the exertions of the Eaſt India Company's civil and military ſervants, aided by the Britiſh armies and fleets, acquired the empire graſped at by its enemy.

Upon the return of peace the European powers aſſumed nearly the ſame weight in the ſcale of politics, which they had held before the commencement of the war; that is, France ſtrengthened its league

league with Auſtria by family ties, while the maritime powers ſtrengthened their union with Pruſſia and the leſſer German States, both to keep up that intereſt which could enable them to oppoſe France, in any new ſcheme of aggrandizement, and to preſerve open the commercial intercourſe, between Britain, the Netherlands and Germany.

France, though twice diſappointed, recurred to its plan of making conqueſts in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies. Availing itſelf of the revolt of the Britiſh Colonies, and of its ancient connexion with Hyder Ally, it again renewed the war againſt Britain. In this ſtruggle the powers of Europe aſſumed a new political aſpect; America and the Eaſt Indies were held as diſtant objects, with which they either had no concern, or from which, in common with France, they might derive new reſources; France in particular, held, that Britain weakened by the loſs of her Colonies, would no longer be able to ſtop the progreſs of the French arms on the ſide of Flanders and Germany. For a time therefore, the whole of the European powers looked on with indifference and apathy, but at laſt Holland and Spain joined in the combination againſt the country, which had hitherto enabled the one to maintain

maintain its independence, and afforded the other the moſt valuable part of its European trade.

The peace which ſeparated her Colonies from Britain, inſtead of producing the effects which France had expected, or the benefits which the other European nations had propoſed to reap from a commerce with the new world, in a ſhort time brought on the fall of the French monarchy, and with it, either the ſubverſion, or the humiliation of all the powers, which France had ſeduced into the general combination againſt Britain.

Before the fall of the French Monarchy, the following was the arrangement of the European ſtates, for maintaining a balance of power.

On the one hand, France, Spain, Sardinia, the Italian powers, with the German Princes under the influence of the houſe of Auſtria;—on the other hand, Britain, Holland, Pruſſia, and the German powers under its influence. The object of France was to increaſe its reſources by its connexion with America, and to render its power predominant on the ſide of Germany by co-operation with Auſtria; the object of Britian was to revive and ſtrengthen its connexion with Holland, as the barrier

of

of Flanders was becoming doubtful, from the miſguided politics of the Emperor Joſeph II. and to confirm its connexion with Pruſſia, by ſupporting the laſt political effort of the great Frederick, viz. that of dividing the influence in the German Empire with the Houſe of Auſtria.

Having thus marked out the political arrangements under which the European nations were proceeding, when the revolution in France, with the ruin of the Monarchy, threatened a like evil to all eſtabliſhed governments of Europe, and of conſequence the extinction of that political ſyſtem, under which they had acted; we have in the next place to mark the effects which have reſulted from the efforts of the European Powers to maintain and to reſtore it.

The firſt effect was, the formation of treaties to reſiſt France, now held to be the common enemy;—the ſecond effect was a general war, to repel equally the invaſions with which the whole were threatened, and to prevent the revolutions which France was exciting in the dominions of all its neighbours.

The

The firſt effect, or the formation of treaties by the European powers to reſiſt the attack of France has already been detailed.* Their jealouſy of each other, which for two ages had led to ſuch various combinations, ſeemed at once to have been forgotten, in the common danger which aſſailed the whole. Auſtria, after a long war with the Turks, inſtead of ſeeing Pruſſia ready to take advantage of the unprovoked invaſion of Flanders, found an ally in its rival; while the Maritime Powers, equally threatened by the new Republic, united with Auſtria, with Pruſſia, and with the German Empire, to repel the French devaſtation of the north of Europe. Spain and the Italian States, equally alarmed, joined in a confederacy dictated not more by the ſenſe of national ſafety than of honor.

Judging from the common fate of war, or from the eſtabliſhed reſources of the allied powers engaged in the ſtruggle, this firſt effect would have been ſufficient, but looking to the reſources which France created, by a general pillage of all the property of its ſubjects, and to the enthuſiaſm for a ſpeculative liberty, which goaded on to battle by the

* See Part I.

ſyſtem of terror, we have before us efforts equally deſtructive to the nation which exerted them, and to the confederates who oppoſed them. What is ſtill more inexplicable, the allied powers not only had the enemy *en maſſe* to oppoſe, but that enemy ſupported by many of the induſtrious orders of the people, in the countries which the French armies invaded: Revolts alſo, in their levelling jargon, were beginning to be organized in countries which the French armies could not reach. Hence we ceaſe to conſider the confederacy formed againſt France to be formidable, in the opinion of the French revolutioniſts.

The ſecond effect, or a general war to repel the invaſions of France, and to check the revolutions which it was fomenting in the countries of its opponents, neceſſarily took place. Had the coaleſced powers acted up to the treaties upon which the war opened, the ſtruggle muſt have ſoon terminated in reſtoring Europe to its former political balance; but the jealouſy or impolitic meaſures of Pruſſia, the embaraſſments from the abettors of France in Holland, and fear in Spain, withdrew theſe powers from the alliance, and have left Britain and Auſtria to oppoſe the enemy againſt which the war opened, and againſt

againſt the maritime power of Europe from the Pyrenees to the German Ocean.

Theſe circumſtances lead us, in the third place, to examine, from the preſent ſtate of Europe, the conſequences to the balance of power, ſuppoſing France under any form of government, to annex its conqueſts to its ancient domain, or to be hemmed in within its former limits.

The preſent political ſtate of Europe affords an aſpect, as new as it is precarious.

The nations which continue the war againſt France, have preſerved their forms of government, though their reſources muſt have been impaired, by the expences incurred in their defence.

The nations who have receded from the war, though they ſtill act under the eſtabliſhed form of their government, yet have, in greater or leſs degrees, loſt that weight with foreign ſtates, and, therefore, that authority with their own ſubjects, which would have enabled them permanently to preſerve the forms of their government.

The nations who have acted upon the principles of neutrality, though they retain their

forms of government, are yet daily loſing in the energy which can preſerve them.

France itſelf, if it begins to aſſume ſomething like a regular ſubordination, yet from the character of its preſent rulers, either muſt ſoon become enſlaved to its directory, or replunged into its revolutionary ſyſtem. The probable, though perhaps, the diſtant termination of the firſt muſt be monarchy, the certain termination of the laſt anarchy.

From the actual State of Europe, upon the firſt ſuppoſition, or that the convulſions in France ſhall terminate in a Monarchy, and that it ſhall retain its conqueſts, we have already ſhewn in Part I. that in territory, ſtrength, (military and naval) and reſources, it muſt be in the capacity, after the return of the arts of peace, to make ſucceſsful attacks in every line, to which it may direct its power.

Upon the ſame ſuppoſition, that it ſhall terminate in a Monarchy, but be hemmed in within its former limits: the balance of power, indeed, may be reſtored in Europe; but France itſelf, from the total change in the character of its inhabi-

tants,

tants, from the exhauſted ſtate of its finances, and from the extinction of its arts, manufactures and trade, muſt be a long time indeed, before it can regain or acquire the influence or aſcendency it once poſſeſſed in the different courts of Europe; an influence which rendered it formidable before the fall of the Monarchy.

Upon the ſecond ſuppoſition, that the preſent proſpect of a regular government ſhall ſink under the revolutionary ſyſtem, though France ſhould retain its conqueſts, the arts of peace cannot be revived, becauſe in this caſe, it can give as little ſecurity to its ſubjects for their property, as to neighbouring nations for the treaties to which it may aſſent. Its rulers can then ſtipulate only, during the continuance of their power; their ſucceſſors or murderers muſt, from the nature of their elevation, violate and break through the engagements of the men whom they have degraded.

Upon the ſame ſuppoſition, of the revival of the revolutionary ſyſtem, and though France ſhould be hemmed in, within its ancient limits, the evil will only be leſs in degree, but not in kind.

The reſult, with reſpect to Europe, is obvious, that under any aſpect of government, which

which France may aſſume, if it retain its conqueſts (or even Flanders without Holland, and much more with it) the political balance of nations muſt ultimately be deſtroyed, but if under a regular ſubordination, it be kept within its former territory, its weight in the ſcale will be in proportion only to its internal reſources, which can but ſlowly recover their former level; and thus, for many years, that kingdom muſt be without the influence or aſcendency over the European Powers, which it has exerciſed for two centuries.

It remains therefore only to conjecture the effects which would follow, from the reſtoration of the former balance of power, or the formation of one which might be analogous to it.

Theſe conjectures may be offered as reſults from the preceding evidence, by recurring to the diviſions of the European Nations already mentioned, and applying that evidence to France, to the nations who are, or have been parties in the war, and to thoſe who have obſerved a neutrality.

France, upon the ſuppoſition of the reſtoration of the former balance of power, will have (reaſoning from the preſent ſtate of that country) the following internal

internal advantages to regain ;—a regular defined government to eſtabliſh and conſolidate, in the permanency of which other nations can have confidence ;—laws to protect private property, and to give to arts, manufactures, and commerce, their natural ſpring ;—a police, which ſhall, at the ſame time, enſure the adminiſtration of the laws, and afford ſafety to the ſubjects of other nations who may have intercourſe with them ;—and reſources ariſing from legal taxation of property of every deſcription.

Theſe neceſſary conſtituents of any ſovereignty, which can take its part among civilized nations, cannot, as the experience of France has demonſtrated, proceed from ſpeculative refinements, but muſt gradually grow up with practice, and experience improving on that practice.

To this point of national character there ſeems to be only two roads, either the reſtoration of the former Monarchy, mollified in its ſpirit by adverſity, or the elevation of a new dynaſty of Directors, or Dictators. The firſt termination would, from the nature of the caſe, more rapidly revive civilization, becauſe leſs expoſed to theory, and becauſe, under a known ſyſtem, it would be more eaſy to recur to practice. The ſecond termination

nation muſt, from the nature of the caſe, be more difficult, more expoſed to the evils of ſpeculation, and leſs reconcileable to practice in France itſelf, and to the uſages and manners of foreign nations having intercourſe with it.

Under theſe circumſtances, it is obvious, that in ſo far as regards France, if the government aſſume any regular aſpect, its weight in the ſcale of Europe muſt be leſs, for many years, than that of the ancient monarchy, which, in the idea of Rouſſeau, " Stretched its filaments from Ver- " ſailles to all the great and all the little capitals " of Europe, not one of which could be touched " and the effects not felt at the centre."

In ſo far as regards the other nations of Europe, the reſtoration of the former balance muſt have effects, correſponding to the exiſting circumſtances, in which they are placed.

As the allies, who have continued the war, muſt be the contracting parties, in reſtoring peace, the balance of power muſt, in the firſt inſtance, reſt with them. Britain from its reſources and naval ſtrength and from the intimate commercial relations ſubſiſting between it and the reſtored ſovereigns of the Netherlands, and the nations bordering on the Baltic, particularly Ruſſia, whoſe force can counteract

teract all the others, will probably proceed upon the principle of preventing new ſchemes of aggrandizement from ariſing in France. The Emperor, from his ſituation and extenſive though diſconnected territories, with his various political relations in Germany, may proceed in one of two lines; if the Monarchy be reſtored to the degraded Bourbons, his weight will neceſſarily be thrown into the ſcale which may ſerve to re-eſtabliſh their power;—but if a new dynaſty of Directors or Dictators ſhall ariſe, Vienna will become a centre of political proceedings to the leſſer powers of the Empire, whoſe recent ſufferings from France muſt, for a long time, detach them from its influence and intereſts.

Upon the firſt ſuppoſition, the treaties of Vienna with France will go to the obtaining of ſecurity to the Frontiers of the Empire, bordering on the Rhine, and to the barrier of Flanders.

Upon the ſecond ſuppoſition, or a new dynaſty in France, the preceding politics of Vienna muſt be altered or weakened; a great ſhare of its force, as well as its influence with the German Princes, muſt be directed to defend the frontier of the Empire and Flanders, againſt a neighbour in

whoſe character and proceedings it can have little confidence.

If we paſs from the Powers who are parties in the war to thoſe who have receded from it, viz. Pruſſia and Spain, and reaſon upon the former ſuppoſition, that of the reſtoration of Monarchy, we may, in like manner, conjecture reſpecting the weight of either of theſe Powers in the political ſcale. The former, or Pruſſia, will eſcape from its entanglements with the Republic of France, but from the diſtance of its dominions from the frontier of that country, as well as from its verſatile politics, it muſt neceſſarily have the French influence in the Empire againſt it; and from its recent conduct towards Britain, and its unnatural (it is to be hoped temporary) abandonment of the Stadtholder, it cannot be ſuppoſed to be ſoon in the train of becoming the political rival of Auſtria in the Empire, and therefore muſt recur to that weight in Europe, which it held before the talents of the great Frederick had raiſed his kingdom to the rank of a firſt nation.

Spain, upon the ſuppoſition of the reſtoration of the Monarchy, would, with the obliquy of having deſerted the firſt branch of its race, neceſſarily recur to the family compact; but upon the ſuppoſition of a new dynaſty, it either muſt remain a de-

a dependency, under ſomething like the late treaty with France, or rekindle its national ſpirit and aſſert its rank as a nation in Europe; for without this effort it may loſe its poſſeſſions in the Indies.

Such ſeem to be the probable effects of the reſtoration of the former balance of power in Europe; but it is more difficult to conjecture, reſpecting the formation of a new one, that ſhall be analogous to it.

If on this ſubject, we were to reaſon from the actual circumſtances of the European ſtates, we muſt, upon the ſuppoſition of a regular government being formed in France, trace power in Europe, to be divided between that country, Spain, and Pruſſia, and between Britain and Auſtria both in Germany and in the Netherlands, and between the northern powers of Sweden, Denmark, and Ruſſia.

Upon the ſuppoſition of the Monarchy being reſtored, France, Spain, and Auſtria, with the leſſer northern Powers, would probably paſs into the one ſcale, while Britain, Ruſſia, and Holland would paſs into the other. The relative reſources and ſtrength, as well as political intereſts of theſe different

claſſes of ſovereignties, point out theſe, as the moſt probable political relations.

Upon the other ſuppoſition, that of a new dynaſty in France, this claſſification of the European Powers would neceſſarily take a different aſpect; into the one ſcale would probably paſs France, Spain, Pruſſia, and the leſſer northern Powers, or Sweden and Denmark; into the other, Auſtria, the Netherlands, Holland, Britain and Ruſſia.

Theſe conjectures ariſe from the preceding claſſes of evidence, and from the exiſting circumſtances of the European States, but in the progreſs of nations, accidents, more frequently than principles, decide their fates.

PART V.

Commercial Effects to Europe, and in a particular Manner to Britain, ſuppoſing the preſent Conqueſts of France to be annexed to it, under any practicable Form of Government, compared with the commercial Effects, ſuppoſing either the former Balance of Trade with the Netherlands, which has been in favour of Britain, to be reſtored, or in the preſent State of Affairs in Europe, a general Peace to take place.

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References to the commercial Treaties with the Netherlands, enumerated in Part III. and to the Reſults from them—Application of theſe Reſults to the Queſtion in commercial Œconomy, What muſt be the Effects of the Netherlands being annexed to the Dominions of France?—Arrangement of the Evidence leading to the Solution of this Queſtion—Review of the Trade of the Auſtrian Netherlands—Natural Produce of this Country—Its manufactured Produce—Imports which it received from Britain, from Holland, and from France—Regulations under which its Trade was conducted—Commercial Inferences from this Claſs of evidence—Review of the Trade of the Dutch Netherlands—Hiſtorical Events which gave riſe to the Dutch Navigation, and affected its Pro-

Progreſs and Decline—Circumſtances, in the Situation of the Dutch which created and muſt, in ſome degree, continue to them the depôt Trade—Recent State of the Britiſh Trade with the United Provinces—Commercial Effects if Holland be annexed to France—Commercial Effects, if the Balance of Trade be either deſtroyed or reſtored; —if deſtroyed, one Centre of Exchange on the Continent, and one Centre of Credit loſt—and the Dutch Arts, Manufactures, Commerce, and Navigation, depreſſed—Effects if reſtored—On the Countries deſolated by the War—Or on Holland—Flanders —the Frontier of Germany—France.—On the Countries which have eſcaped the Deſolations of the War—Or on Great Britain—the German States—Spain—Italy—Ruſſia—And on the Neutral Powers —Conjectures reſpecting the commercial Effects, ſuppoſing a general Peace to take place at this Time —Circumſtances in which Commercial Nations would probably be placed, on the ſuppoſition of this Event—Trade of Great Britain—of Germany —of Ruſſia—of Spain—of Pruſſia—of Sweden—of Denmark—and of America—Reſults leading to what, in a Treaty of Peace, would be ſafe and permanent for Trade—Firſt Conjecture from theſe reſults—Second Conjecture—Third Conjecture.

IN the third Part of theſe Enquiries, the commercial treaties between the Netherlands (Auſtrian

(Auſtrian and Dutch,) on the one part, and Great Britain on the other, have been enumerated, and, in connexion with the political treaties detailed in Part II. led to concluſions, to the following effect;—

—That a commercial connexion had ſubſiſted between Britain and the Netherlands, for three centuries, which contributed to the reſources of both countries;—

—That this connexion was neceſſary for Britain, by opening, for its produce and foreign merchandize, the markets of the Netherlands and of Germany;—

—That it has been a leading object, in all the treaties formed between the ſucceſſive Sovereigns of the Netherlands and of Britain, to preſerve that country, not only as a barrier againſt the French power, but as a coaſt to protect the extenſive commerce and naval power of Great Britain and Holland.

The queſtion for examination is;—Whether, upon the ſuppoſition of France annexing, at a general peace, the Auſtrian Netherlands to its northern frontier, it would not become completely poſſeſſed of the trade of that country, and conſequently of the

naval

naval power which it would produce; and if ſo, in a ſituation to controul the trade of Britain with the Netherlands and with the north of Europe, and in the event of a war, to deſtroy the moſt productive part of our commercial intercourſe with the Baltic, and alſo eſſentially to haraſs our coaſting trade, on the eaſtern ſide of theſe kingdoms?

With the object of bringing forward the evidence, upon this intereſting national ſubject, we ſhall;—

1. Review the conſtituent parts of the trade of the Auſtrian Netherlands, and connect with it the commercial intercourſe which that country had, at the opening of the war, with Britain, with the United Provinces, and with Germany;

2. Review the conſtituent parts of the trade of the Dutch Netherlands, and connect it with the commercial tranſactions which Britain had with the Auſtrian Netherlands and with Germany;

3. Examine the commercial effects which would neceſſarily reſult from the trade with the Netherlands being deſtroyed, and contraſt them with the effects which would follow, either from that trade being reſtored, or from a peace taking

taking place, in the preſent ſtate of affairs in Europe.

I. Trade of the Auſtrian Netherlands.

In reviewing this ſubject, we ſhall give a ſhort ſtatement of the natural and manufactured productions which the Flamands exported to different countries;—of the imports they received from Britain, Holland, and France;—of the regulations under which commerce was conducted: and ſubjoin commercial inferences reſpecting the importance of this trade to Great Britain.

The principal natural productions were, as follow; *—

Corn, of which this country, upon an average, produced annually more than was equal to the conſumption of its inhabitants for two years; the ſurplus formed its moſt valuable export; a large quantity was taken off by the French on their northern frontier, and paid for in French coin (which had a general circulation in the Netherlands)

* The facts, upon which the reaſonings on this article proceed, were furniſhed from a commercial ſurvey of the Netherlands, by a gentleman not leſs diſtinguiſhed for his commercial, than his financial information.

and with manufactured ſilks and wines. Beſides the corn ſent to France by the frontier, conſiderable quantities were ſhipped from Oſtend to the ſouthern parts of that kingdom, and to other ſouthern parts of Europe; proportions alſo of it were exported occaſionally from Oſtend to Hamburgh and to the Baltic; but the greateſt quantity was ſent to Holland by the Scheldt and the Maeſe, both to ſupply the Dutch, and for exportation.

Flax—was the next article: and in quality ſuperior to any raiſed in Europe. This article may be cultivated in Flanders with ſucceſs to almoſt any extent.*

Rape-ſeed—was cultivated in conſiderable quantities; the oil expreſſed from it was chiefly ſent to Holland, and formed a very material article of merchandize with that country.

Tobacco—was cultivated in the country between Bruſſels, Louvain, and Tirlemont. In quality it is inferior to the Maryland tobacco, and was conſumed chiefly by the inhabitants in ſmoaking.

* The flax uſed in the manufacture of laces and fine thread, for exportation, is pulled when green, and prepared by a particular proceſs, for that purpoſe.

Hops.

Hops.—The country between Bruſſels and Louvain produced the fineſt hops in Europe; and in ſuch abundance, that it ſupplied all the breweries in the Netherlands.—

Coals.—The beſt mines are in the neighbourhood of Namur.

The principal manufactured productions are; —

Linens.—Though this article was chiefly made in the country about Ghent, branches of the manufacture were to be found over all the provinces. It was in part exported to Portugal, but chiefly to Spain; and, from the latter, was ſhipped, both in a white and printed ſtate, for South America.

Laces—known under the names of Bruſſels and Mechlin, were not made by any collected body of people, but wove in private houſes by women, children, and old men. The quantity ſmuggled into Britain was more conſiderable ſome years ago, than at this time. The beſt judges are of opinion, that the manufacture of fine laces in Britain can never be carried on with ſucceſs.

Leather—was manufactured in conſiderable quantities, both in Flanders and in Brabant; though inferior in quality to Engliſh leather, it was

cheaper, and in general uſe with the inhabitants. It was exported in conſiderable quantities to various parts of Germany.

Hats—of the finer kind, were equally good with the Engliſh. The Engliſh coarſe or felt hats were ſuperior to the Flemiſh, but the high duty upon them prevented their finding a market.*

Superfine woollen cloths—were manufactured in the Duchies of Limbourg and Juliers, and in different parts of Brabant, at from five to twelve per cent. lower than Engliſh cloths of the ſame quality. The coarſe cloths however for men, ſuch as bear ſkin duffles, and even coarſe ſtockings, were chiefly brought from England.

Beer—was manufactured in large quantities at Louvain, and was of two kinds, *bierre blanche* and *bierre brune*; the former of a very inferior quality, the latter, even the beſt ſort of it, called *bierre Peterman*, was not ſo good as our ordinary ale. It

* The cheapneſs of hats in Flanders, was owing to the following circumſtances:—To the great quantities of cheap materials for the manufacture of hats found in the north of Germany;—To the texture of the hat, being leſs hard than the Engliſh, and therefore taking in the dye or colour better; and to the greater quantity of madder uſed in all black dye ſtuffs, in Flanders and Holland, than in Great Britain.

was

was chiefly consumed in the country, and was but a very inconsiderable article of export.

Black Silks—of which the principal manufacture was at Antwerp, were superior in quality and colour to any in Europe.

Cutting of Diamonds.—A great body of people were employed at Antwerp, in this single branch. In 1792, a considerable proportion of the diamonds in Europe were sent to this place to be cut.

Salt.—A considerable manufacture of this article was carried on at Antwerp, but the Dutch extorted a duty on the vessels bringing the sea water.

Printed Cottons.—A very small quantity of the white cloth for printing was made in Flanders; the chief supply was from the sales of the English East-India Company, and from the coarse white cloths of Manchester, Glasgow and Dundee. The importation from Holland has been very trifling, since the decline of the Dutch East-India Company.†

† The inferiority of the printing, both in taste and workmanship, to the English, is so great, that if the restrictions had been taken off, even with a considerable duty to the Emperor, the trade might have been established.

Pottery

Pottery—was of a very inferior kind, and in little eſtimation; but to protect this article, a duty of four pence per pound weight, was laid upon pottery imported. Hence the uſe of china and plate was greater in Flanders than in any country in Europe.*

Iron manufactures of Liege—The principal articles were cannon, guns, piſtols, cutlaſſes and nails. The greateſt part of the fire arms were exported to the coaſt of Africa, and to give them value had the Engliſh mark upon them. From the uſe however of machinery, in facilitating labour in England, and from the expertneſs of the work people, at Birmingham and Sheffield, we have underſold the Liegeois in every one of theſe articles, except nails, of which very conſiderable quantities were ſent to Holland, to Brabant, and to Flanders, by the way of Louvain. On comparing the prime coſt of the penknives, buckles, ſciſſars, &c. made at Liege, with that of the ſame articles made in England, there was from thirty to forty per cent. in our favor.

What enabled the Liegeois to carry on this manufacture, was their coal mines, the veins of which were found near the ſurface, and therefore worked

* If a moderate duty had been taken on Engliſh pottery, the Emperor would have drawn a conſiderable revenue.

at

at a leſs expence than in England; but in quality the coals of Liege were from fifteen to twenty per cent. leſs valuable than the medium quality of Newcaſtle coals. The land carriage from Liege to the heads of the navigable canals is from thirty to forty miles, ſo that the price of a ton of coals at Antwerp was about thirty ſhillings.

Having taken a curſory view of the produce of the Netherlands which conſtituted the articles of its trade, we have next to advert to the imports which that country received from Britain, Holland and France.

The foreign trade of the Low Countries was chiefly confined to the port of Oſtend, for what was received at Antwerp came wholly through the Dutch Provinces. The harbour of Nieuport is too ſhallow to admit large veſſels fit for a foreign trade, and has chiefly been reſorted to by veſſels employed in fiſhing upon the coaſt. A conſiderable quantity of goods from France was received through the frontier, particularly wines and ſilks, in exchange for corn, butter, Rheniſh wine, ſpirits, &c.*

* A conſiderable quantity of foreign wines and ſpirits was imported at Oſtend.

The

The Britiſh exports to Oſtend progreſſively encreaſed from 1740 to 1765, and at that period conſiſted chiefly of the Britiſh colony tobacco, rice and raw ſugar.

The value of the Britiſh manufactures ſent to Oſtend, and in ſmaller veſſels to Nieuport, in 1792, amounted to ſomewhat more than £.400,000, and the value of the foreign merchandize to upwards of £.650,000; of which about £.400,000 was in Eaſt-India muſlins, callicoes, pepper, China and Bengal ſilks; and about £.200,000 in the products of America and the Weſt-Indies.

On an average, of the three years preceding the war, 302 Britiſh veſſels, carrying 33,422 tons, (including their repeated voyages in the ſame year) cleared out from the ports of this kingdom for the Auſtrian Netherlands, and 288 Britiſh veſſels, carrying 27,646 tons, arrived from thence in Britain. The value of the freights cannot be eaſily aſcertained. It muſt however be an object of conſiderable mercantile profit, as well as of political importance, by giving employment to ſo great a body of Britiſh ſeamen.

The imported goods at Oſtend were ſent by

by the canal to Bruges, and thence to Ghent,* at as little expence as they could be by way of Antwerp, a circumſtance which proves, that the opening of the Scheldt would not be of ſuch commercial importance to Flanders, as has been generally ſuppoſed, whatever might be its political conſequences.

The general regulations under which the commerce in the Netherlands was conducted, were, as follow;—

Oſtend, as has been already noticed, was the principal if not the only port; the goods were landed and depoſited in the warehouſes of the merchants, without being inſpected by the revenue officers, and in this view of the ſubject, Oſtend was a free port. Before, however, the goods were allowed to paſs the barrier gate to be ſent to markets in the country, the merchant or his agent was obliged to give a manifeſt to the Imperial officers, declaratory of the contents of each package, and of the place to which the goods were to be ſent. The packages were then *plombed*, ſo that the contents could not be

* Ghent may be conſidered as the centre of the markets in Flanders.

touched, till the goods reached their place of deſtination, where they were examined by the revenue officer who collected the duties. In ſome caſes the duty was rated, in others there was a rated duty and a duty *ad valorem*, in the ſame way as on our Eaſt-India callicoes; on ſome articles, the duty *ad valorem* only was paid. If the declared value appeared to the officer to be too low rated, he might take the goods on his own account, upon making prompt payment to the merchant of 15 per cent. above the declared value, and the King's duty. Beſides theſe public duties, local impoſts were levied, applicable to the revenues of towns or diſtricts.

Goods intended for Germany or other countries, and *plombed* upon the entrance, paid at the laſt frontier, about one per cent. for the tranſit. It was difficult to aſcertain the average amount, per cent.; becauſe ſuch duties were in ſome inſtances collected, at a certain rate on the ell, hundred weight, &c. and in others, on the value. At a medium the imports from Britain were not ſubject by law to a higher duty than ten per cent.

It appears from theſe facts, that the trade to the Auſtrian Netherlands took off annually, upwards

wards of £.1,000,000 of our merchandize, employed upwards of 25,000 tons of our ſhipping, and muſt be regarded as an object of great national advantage.

The commercial and naval inferences which this evidence affords, ſeem to be the following:—

—That as the Auſtrian Netherlands depended on other countries, for a ſupply of many of the conveniences and luxuries of life, ſuch as Britiſh manufactures, and Weſt and Eaſt-India produce, a valuable outlet for our trade would be loſt, by the Low Countries becoming a ſeat of commerce, dependent on France;—

—That France by the poſſeſſion of the Netherlands, by opening the navigation of the Scheldt, and by rendering Antwerp a depôt for merchandize, would increaſe its commercial reſources, controul the Dutch trade in the eaſtern branch of that river, which communicates with Zealand and Holland, engroſs that portion of traffic which has hitherto been carried on, partly by the Dutch, and partly by the Flamands, through Weſtphalia into Germany, and acquire the com-

mand of the mouth of the Maeſe, the principal outlet of the Rhine, by which the manufactures of Britain paſs, not only into the Seven Provinces, but into Germany, and by which the produce of Germany has been brought to theſe Provinces and to Britain ;—

—That France by rendering Antwerp a naval port, could controul not only the Dutch trade on the Maeſe and the Rhine, but that of Zealand and Holland; and, from the mouth of the Scheldt* being nearly oppoſite to that of the Thames, in the event of any future war, by ſquadrons and cruizers, it could diſtreſs both our foreign and coaſting trade in the Narrow Seas, in the ſame manner as

* What Mirabeau, who overturned the French monarchy, ſaid, on the diſpute between the Emperor and the Dutch, reſpecting the Scheldt, incontrovertibly illuſtrates not only the importance of the Netherlands to the defence of Holland, but the ſchemes of aggrandizement which the preſent rulers of France have in view, in retaining the poſſeſſion of them; " It is not, as has often been alledged, mere " commercial jealouſies, or the rivalry of merchants, that " is in diſpute between the Emperor and the Dutch; the " real ſafety, the phyſical exiſtence, as well as the liberty " and independence of the United Provinces are at ſtake."

See

as it has done our Italian and Turkey traders from its own hoſtile coaſts, and from thoſe of Spain in the Mediterranean.†

II. Trade of the Dutch Netherlands.

In taking a review of the conſtituents of the trade of the Dutch Netherlands with Britain, we muſt recur to the hiſtorical events which gave riſe to the Dutch navigation and affected its progreſs; to the circumſtances, in the ſituation of the United Provinces, which have created and which muſt, in ſome degree, continue with them a depôt trade in Europe; to the recent ſtate of the trade between Britain and Holland; and then draw from this evidence, the reſults which would follow, if the Provinces again become independent, or if they be annexed as a dependency on France.

From the union of Utrecht 1579, to the treaty of Munſter 1648, which acknowledged the independence of the States, the Dutch chiefly directed their attention to the eſtabliſhment of their

See Doubts concerning the Free Navigation of the Scheldt, &c. by the Count de Mirabeau.

† See Whitworth's Tables.

foreign

foreign trade and ſettlements in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies. In 1595, Houtman eſtabliſhed their connexion with Bantam, in the Iſland of Java; and in 1598, their Eaſt India Company was formed, which, in a ſhort time, eſtabliſhed ſettlements at Banda, and in the Moluccas. Soon afterwards they fixed eſtabliſhments at Sumatra, Ceylon, &c. and by 1640, got poſſeſſion of the principal Portugueſe ſettlements in the Eaſt Indies; at the ſame period, their Weſt India Company attempted eſtabliſhments upon the Coaſt of Brazil, in which, though they failed, the Company when revived got poſſeſſion of the Iſlands of Tobago and Curaçoa. They afterwards eſtabliſhed themſelves at New Netherlands or New York, at Surinam, Berbice, Eſſequibo, and Demerary; and in Europe, they extended their navigation to Germany, the Baltic, the Auſtrian Netherlands, England, France, Spain, and the Levant.*

Such articles of European manufactured produce, as they either conſumed themſelves or exported, they brought, during the early periods of the Republic, from the European countries,

* La Richeſſe de la Hollande, Tom. I. paſſim.

with

with which they had already formed connexions, or treaties of commerce.

The commercial as well as political connexion between Holland and England was kept open, from the epoch of the union at Utrecht 1579, to the peace of Munſter 1648; and as the Dutch had little intercourſe with Flanders, the Engliſh woollens, &c. ſupplied equally their conſumpt and their export trade;—At laſt however they eſtabliſhed the woollen manufactures at Leyden, which ſupplied them with broad and narrow cloths, camblets, ſerges, druggets, &c. and a linen manufactory at Harlaem, of which alſo there were branches at Groningen, Frieſland, and Overyſſel.—At Delft, they eſtabliſhed a manufacture of earthen ware, in imitation of china; and this article ſupplied not only the home market but that of moſt of the countries in Europe, till the riſe of the Engliſh pottery, which completely took the market from Delft.—At Amſterdam there was a manufacture of tapeſtry, now in diſuſe, and manufactures of ſugar, ſalt, yellow wax, &c. which are ſtill carried on—At Schiedam and its neighbourhood, the diſtillery of corn ſpirits has been long eſtabliſhed, and its gin ſerved equally as an article of conſumpt in the country,

and

and of export to all the different countries to which the Dutch trade extended.

The Dutch fiſheries, particularly their herring fiſhery, were principally carried on in North Holland.

The ſituation of Holland, relatively to Germany, formed it for the depôt trade, both by a branch of the Rhine communicating with the Zuyder Zee, and by the exports of that country coming down the Rhine and the Maeſe at a moderate expence.—Dordrecht was long the principal depôt of Rheniſh wine, and (as well as Amſterdam, Rotterdam, &c.) of timber, floated down theſe rivers for ſhip building.

From France the Dutch brought velvets, ſilks of all kinds, and gold and ſilver ſtuffs. In 1664, they obtained a tariff, which ſet aſide the duty of 50 ſous, per ton, impoſed upon goods brought from Holland into France, but the war which broke out in 1672, put a ſtop to this commerce, 'till 1678. Though the trade was reſtored in ſome degree, (the war in 1690, having again interrupted it,) the Dutch began to eſtabliſh manufactures for themſelves, in velvets, ſattins and other ſilks, gold and ſilver brocades; and, in Brabant, of lace, paper, &c. in which they were aſſiſted by numbers of French refugees

refugees; but from this period to 1713, the tariff with France was not renewed.

From theſe facts it appears;—That the Dutch owed the reſources, which raiſed and ſupported them, as an independent people, to their navigation to the Eaſt and Weſt-Indies, and to the ſettlements for trade, which they eſtabliſhed in both; becauſe theſe ſettlements, at the ſame time that they formed their marine, furniſhed them with foreign merchandize, to be exchanged for European produce;—

—That the ſterility of natural productions in the United Provinces, prevented the Dutch from manufacturing articles properly their own;—

—That their efforts to create manufactures, from materials brought from other countries, could not keep pace with the manufactures of thoſe nations, who were poſſeſſed of crude materials, ſuch were the woollens, the hardware, and the pottery of England * ;—

* A proportion of the clay uſed in the manufacture of Delft was imported from England.

—That when the political ſituation of neighbouring countries, particularly of England, in the long peace, from the treaty of Utrecht to the war of 1739, enabled it, from the raw materials which the country afforded, to inſtitute manufactures, ſuch as hardware, pottery, and linen, which laſt was alſo brought from Ireland, Scotland, and the Auſtrian Netherlands, the Dutch manufactures of the ſame deſcriptions gradually declined.

The circumſtances in the ſituation of the United Provinces which have created, and which muſt, in ſome degree, continue with them the depôt trade of Europe, were as follow;

—When the connexion between the Auſtrian and Dutch Netherlands was broken off by the civil wars out of which the republic aroſe, the inhabitants were not only under the neceſſity of ſupplying their own wants, by navigation, but the wants of other countries, then ſtrangers to manufactures; hence the ſudden extention of the Dutch navigation to all parts of the world; hence the treaties of commerce which have been enumerated; and hence the immenſe extent of the foreign trade of Holland, which

which may, in a great meaſure, be called unnatural, becauſe it reſted chiefly, not on their own wants, but on thoſe of others.

—The central ſituation of Holland, in Europe, afforded it the means of ſupplying, in a ſhort time, the demand of thoſe nations, ſituated at a great diſtance from the countries, the productions of which they ſtood in need of; Holland therefore offered a ready market for the ſale of the ſuperfluous commodities of thoſe nations, became an emporium for the depôt trade, and muſt, in ſome degree retain this advantage.

To theſe circumſtances, may be added, the following political encouragements;—

—The ports of Holland offered a freedom of navigation to the ſhips of all nations, without impoſing any additional duties beyond thoſe paid by the Dutch themſelves; though theſe were conſiderable;*—

* From the *Mémoire concernant les impoſitions et droits en Europe*, a work publiſhed in 1768, under the orders of the French King, and admitted to be of very high authority, it

—Foreigners obtained an eaſy admiſſion to the right of burghers in all the towns, which circumſtance had the effect to draw inhabitants to the provinces from different countries; who, from the connexions they had left, extended mercantile intercourſe, by making the merchants in every part of Europe acquainted with the certainty of a market and the ſecurity of payment in Holland;—

—As the inhabitants of the Provinces had not domeſtic objects, for their induſtry, they were under the neceſſity of employing themſelves in foreign commerce, partly on their own account and partly on commiſſion. By theſe means, Holland became a depoſit of the productions of other nations, and was able to advance large ſums, at a low intereſt, for which they had the value ſecured in their own warehouſes. Thus, though the charge on ſending the goods to Holland was againſt the trade, the credit given and the market found rendered that country an emporium;—

—The ſtate of the Dutch funds enabled them

appears, that the impoſts in Holland were divided into thoſe of appraiſing or valuation, cuſtoms, exciſe according to weight, the capitation (or *heeregeld*) and a ſpecies of land-tax. The whole of theſe duties were regulated by a tariff. Vol. i. p. 202.

to

to make loans to the European Powers, engaged in a ſucceſſion of wars; as the intereſt of theſe loans was to be paid annually, the merchants, in the countries which obtained the loans, remitted to Holland the payments, by inveſtments of goods.

Holland thus became one centre of the exchanges of all Europe, and to its merchants were entruſted the general operations of finance, a circumſtance which rendered it eaſy for individuals to have commercial dealings with that country.

About the year 1740, however, a material change took place in the Dutch carrying-trade. The other maritime nations of Europe began to obſerve, that they might be the carriers to Holland of their own produce, and leave it there to be ſold on commiſſion. The Dutch merchants, under this innovation, gave two-thirds of the value in advance, with which the ſhip-maſter, under inſtructions from his owners, either purchaſed the goods required for his home market, or returned with the profits of the freight. From this time the Dutch carrying-trade began to decline.

As there were other centres of exchange on the

the continent of Europe, viz. Hamburgh, Cadiz, and Leghorn, the foreign merchants, who ſent ſhips and cargoes to Holland, inſtead of receiving the goods of other countries from thence, began to carry Dutch bills, for two-thirds of their cargoes, to thoſe ports; and, on the credit of ſuch bills, either purchaſed cargoes for their own countries, or proceeded to the ports which afforded the commodities.

The Dutch credit being eſtabliſhed, theſe bills ſerved them as money, for which they received goods or other bills, either on the next port which the ſhip was directed to reſort to, or they returned home for a new cargo of their own produce.

From theſe circumſtances, it was the opinion of the beſt informed merchants, that in a ſhort time, the Dutch muſt have loſt (independently of the late calamities) a large proportion of their carrying and depôt trade, though from the extent of their funds they muſt always retain a valuable portion of both, as well as from their ſituation, which connects them with the great rivers that run down from Germany, and diſembogue themſelves in the Narrow Seas.

From

From theſe facts it would appear;—That the ſituation of the Dutch Netherlands, relatively to Auſtrian Flanders and to Germany, in every poſſible ſtate of Europe, muſt give to the Sovereigns of them the command of the commerce of the Maeſe and the Rhine, and, of courſe, an excluſive commerce in the produce of the north of Germany, which cannot otherwiſe be ſent to the north of Europe, except by the navigation from the Elbe, expoſed to the marine of France, if left in poſſeſſion of the ports of the Dutch Netherlands;—

—That from the ſame circumſtance, the Dutch muſt have an excluſive import of all foreign goods required by Germany, which paſs up thoſe rivers to the markets in the northern circles of the empire;—

—That if the commerce of Holland ſhall ceaſe to poſſeſs the advantages, which it held from its depôt trade, or from its being a centre of exchange, the Dutch proportion of theſe advantages can be but partially acquired by Britain.

The following extracts of the tonnage inward and outward, and of the imports and exports between

tween Great Britain and Holland, from the year 1789 to 1794 inclusive, taken from the public accounts, will shew the value of the Dutch trade to Great Britain.

EXPORTS from HOLLAND to BRITAIN.

Year	Vessels	Tonnage*	Men	Value of Imports.
1789	909	113,726	——	£. 418,846 7 10
1790	975	122,924	6,688	714,707 15 10
1791	897	120,552	6,543	853,984 3 2
1792	1,002	130,281	7,139	801,535 1 6
1793	1,004	132,609	6,988	806,306 13 1
1794	1,121	137,635	8,002	1,013,351 10 1

EXPORTS from BRITAIN to HOLLAND.

Year	Vessels	Tonnage*	Men	British manufactures, value exp	Foreign Merchandize, value exported
				£	£
1789	1,176	141,843	—	800,598 16 11	835,467 7 10
179c	998	133,553	6495	727,646 11 3	695,698 17 6
179'	957	135,377	7002	604,862 4 8	673,149 9 4
1792	1,152	139,694	7699	785,207 2 11	1,516,449 8 2
1793	1,000	135,735	7237	476,582 9 2	1,027,938 19 8
1794	858	113,006	6306	464,575 12 10	1,141,736 8 10

From the preceding statement, it appears;—

* It is to be understood, that the tonnage and number of vessels in this statement is given, as comprehending their repeated voyages, in the same year.

—That

—That the average number of Britiſh veſſels ſent to Holland, during the laſt ſix years, has been 1,023, the tonnage of which, including their repeated voyages, was 133,201, and the value upon the ſame average of Britiſh manufactures, about £.643,245, and of Britiſh foreign merchandize, about £.983,406 making together £.1,626,651.—

—That the average number of veſſels from Holland to Britain during the laſt ſix years, has been 984, the tonnage of which, upon the like average, was 126,288, and the value, upon the ſame average, about £.768,122.—

—That the number of men employed in the ſervice, upon the average of the laſt five years, was, from Britain to Holland, about 7,000, and from Holland to Britain alſo about 7,000; a nurſery, which is the more valuable, becauſe the ſailors return often into port.

It appears from the commercial ſituation of the United Provinces, relatively to the Auſtrian Netherlands;—

—That the Dutch have had the command of the imports from Germany by the Rhine,

to the Maeſe, and the Zuyder Zee, and therefore the ſupply of the markets in the north of Germany with ſuch Britiſh produce, or ſuch articles of Britiſh foreign merchandize, as the German markets took off, and as the Dutch themſelves could not furniſh; and that to this ſupply may be added a conſiderable ſhare of the Britiſh produce, which the Dutch ſent to Oſtend, and through the Scheldt to Antwerp, to ſupply the markets which communicated with that city;—

—That the Dutch, by the poſſeſſion of this trade, have been enabled to create and to maintain that navy, which in conjunction with the Britiſh navy, has excluded the Southern Powers from maritime efforts in the North Seas*;—

—That though the Dutch, ſince the treaty of Munſter, have apparently had the balance of trade with Germany and Flanders in their favor, yet that from the amount of Britiſh produce ſent through

* As the Dutch have obtained their naval ſtores from Flanders and Germany, they have hitherto, but in an inconſiderable degree, interfered with the Britiſh trade to the Eaſt Seas, or to Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Ruſſia.

Holland

Holland to the German and Flemiſh markets, this balance has indirectly been in favor of Great Britain.

Having thus adverted to the hiſtorical events which gave riſe to the Dutch navigation and commerce, and affected its progreſs; to the circumſtances in the ſituation of the United Provinces, which have created, and which muſt, in ſome degree, continue with them, a ſhare of the depot trade; and having taken a view of the recent ſtate of the Dutch trade with Britain; it remains only to look at the effects which would follow, from the Dutch Netherlands being annexed to France, or returning to their former national independency.

It muſt be obvious, that if France ſhall keep poſſeſſion of the Auſtrian Netherlands, the liberty and independence of the United Provinces muſt terminate.* So much have the States been convinced of this truth, that from the eſtabliſhment to the late fall of their government, it has been

* Mirabeau, as quoted in a preceding note.

the leading principle of their wiſeſt ſtateſmen,* to exert every national, as well as confederated effort with Britain and Germany, to maintain Auſtrian Flanders, as the barrier equally of their liberty and of their reſources.† If then the French retain Auſtrian Flanders, the following effects upon the Dutch commerce and naval power, muſt neceſſarily take place.

* Viz. Barneveldt, De Witt, King William, &c.

† It merits obſervation, that the ſyſtem of defence for the barrier, laid down by King William, and afterwards adopted in the treaty of Utrecht, viz. of placing the principal garriſons of the barrier in the cuſtody of the Dutch troops, was invariably followed till the acceſſion of the late Emperor Joſeph II. This Prince, however, by taking poſſeſſion of the barrier himſelf, and ſoon afterwards by deſtroying the fortifications of the towns which formed it, held out the temptation to the French monarchy, of exciting factions in Holland to overturn the Dutch government, as it has done that of Britiſh America; as by rendering Holland a dependency on France, they could eaſily over-run the narrow but open country of the Auſtrian Netherlands, and thus equally ſubdue their friends and their foes. The politics of Joſeph thus prepared the whole of the Netherlands for the calamities, which the French Republic, continuing the ſchemes of the monarchy they have ſubverted, have brought upon the Low Countries.

1. The

1. The Dutch, from the ſituation of their powerful and unreſtrained neighbour, muſt, in the event of any future war with Great Britain, act in obedience to France, becauſe a French navy in the Scheldt, more powerful than the crippled navy of Holland, would be ready to cruſh it, or rather to put it in requiſition, to deſtroy the coaſting and Eaſt Sea trade of Briain, as well as to make an attack upon the north coaſt of England, and upon the coaſts of Scotland and Ireland.

2. That balance of trade in Europe muſt be diſplaced, which has had its centre in Britain, from which one great line has run through Holland to Germany connected with Flanders; and another to the ſtates bordering on the Baltic; and if this centre could be transferred to France, with the Auſtrian Netherlands annexed to it, it muſt, of neceſſity, command the trade of the Dutch Netherlands and the north of Germany, and depreſs the hitherto undiſturbed commerce between Britain and the Northern Powers.

* The commerce of Zealand with England conſiſted chiefly in corn, and the returns made were principally ſpirits and Eaſt-India ſpiceries.

III. Having

III. Having thus ſeparately conſidered the conſtituents of the commerce of the Netherlands, Auſtrian and Dutch, it remains in the laſt place, to examine the commercial effects which probably would reſult from the former balance of trade being deſtroyed, and to offer conjectures reſpecting the probable commercial conſequences which would reſult from a general peace taking place, in the preſent ſituation of affairs in Europe.

The commercial effects, upon the firſt ſuppoſition, viz. that of the former balance of trade being deſtroyed, by the annexation of the Netherlands, Auſtrian and Dutch, to France, under the different poſſible forms of government which that country may aſſume, would probably be the following;—

1. The preceding evidence has ſhewn, that the ſituation of Holland, with reſpect to Germany and the North, and the political privileges given by the Dutch government to the merchants of every country, rendered it a centre of exchange for the produce of the northern European nations, ſeek-

ſeeking the productions of the ſouthern, and *vice verſa*.* It is obvious that none of theſe advantages can remain to the Dutch, if they ultimately become a department of France, and it is not poſſible, under any circumſtances in which the overgrown territories of France can be placed, that this centre of exchange could be removed to it ;—

—Becauſe, if the monarchy be reſtored, its aggrandizement, by ſuch an acceſſion of territory, would place commercial nations in a dependence upon it, inconſiſtent with that confidence in the probity and regularity of its dealings, which is required, or which has been practiced by the Dutch ;—

—Becauſe, if a new dynaſty be begun in France, the preceding argument would be ſtill ſtronger, than upon the ſuppoſition of the reſtoration of the ancient race ;—

—Becauſe, if the preſent Oligarchy, (the Di-

* Holland, as a dependency on France, could no longer be one of the centres of exchange in Europe.

rectory)

rectory) ſhall be confirmed, from its very ſpirit it would preclude France from becoming a centre of exchange. The divided power of its five ſovereigns muſt produce one of two effects; either different views of aggrandizement by new conqueſts; or the influence of one of them, reducing the others to become the tools of his power. With either of theſe extremes the commercial confidence of foreign nations is irreconcilable. —Admitting it however to be poſſible, that theſe five ſovereigns ſhall have but one principle, viz. that of promoting the arts of peace, and of weighing the intereſts of their country and of other nations in the balance of juſtice; ſtill, by the new conſtitution, their reign is temporary, and it is not in the ſcale of probability, that their ſucceſſors would act up to this perfect character, and yet, nothing ſhort of it could render France a centre of exchange, by giving to it that confidence which would induce foreign nations to entruſt them with their property;—

—Becauſe, if the revolutionary ſyſtem ſhould return, it would be as inconſiſtent with the confidence of the miſerables, who are to groan under it

it, as it would be with the intereſt of nations at a diſtance from its yoke.

2. The credit, mercantile and national, reſulting from the confidence which has formed and continued a centre of exchange in the Dutch Netherlands, would, under any of the preceding forms of government in France, be impaired, if not annihilated.

It is unneceſſary to re-apply any of the preceding reaſonings to eſtabliſh this effect, farther than to obſerve, that even ſuppoſing the former monarchy of France to be reſtored, and with it that degree of ſecurity given to property, which the old laws of France conferred, ſtill credit in this country, from the ſpirit of the government, was leſs certain, than under thoſe commercial governments where credit was a primary political object. Judging alſo from the recent calamities of France, (and theſe calamities have, in ſome degree, extended to the countries we are ſuppoſing annexed to it,) its national credit muſt be more fluctuating, than in any epocha of its commercial hiſtory.

3. The ingenuity and induſtry which have created the arts, manufactures, commerce and

navigation of the Dutch and of Britain, connected with the certainty of the exchanges and the credit of theſe countries, could not, under any of the preceding forms of government in France, be exerciſed by that people.

It is obvious, upon a retroſpect, that the Dutch Netherlands, as a dependency of France, and no longer either a centre of exchange or of credit, could neither preſerve the limited portion of arts and manufactures which they poſſeſſed, nor, by commerce and navigation, encourage the arts and manufactures of other nations.

It is not leſs obvious, from the deſolation which has taken place in France, that no form of government which it may aſſume, could ſpeedily reſtore its arts and manufactures; and no encouragements which it could hold out to the commerce and navigation of the Dutch, could enable that people ſpeedily to revive their traffic with Auſtrian Flanders, equally humbled with themſelves; or with Germany, become diſtruſtful of a neighbour, no longer in a ſituation to fulfil commercial engagements: Hence thoſe amounts of Britiſh produce, and of Britiſh foreign merchandiſe, which formerly, under the experience of the Dutch credit

credit, ſupplied their demands, could not be entruſted to merchants no longer at liberty to fulfil their engagements, but on the contrary, liable to break them, under the commands of a predominant maſter, and it is not probable, under any ſubordination in France, that it can ſoon either revive its own arts and manufactures, encourage thoſe of its new dependents, or render their commerce and navigation ſubſervient to the markets which they formerly frequented.

Suppoſing, however, order to ariſe from the political chaos under which France and its dependencies are buried, it muſt be a long time indeed, before the arts of peace can be revived, or the funds which nouriſh them be brought into activity; and it is more than probable, before theſe ends can be produced, that the reſtleſs and plundering temper of the Revolutioniſts may lead them to new ſchemes of aggrandizement, which again may deſolate civilized Europe.

Having conſidered the commercial effects, which would neceſſarily reſult from the former balance of trade being deſtroyed, we have next to conjecture reſpecting the conſequences of its being reſtored.

1. The nations which have been deſolated by the war, will, in proportion to the evils which they have experienced, and to the greater or leſſer advantages of their natural and commercial ſituation, recover their level in the exchanges, credit, commerce, and navigation of Europe.

—Holland has been drained of large ſums of money, by contributions as well as by the following indirect pillage. The inhabitants have been compelled to receive aſſignats for the neceſſaries which the ſoldiers bought, and the States compelled to give money to the inhabitants for theſe aſſignats; though in paying their contributions, they either muſt remit the aſſignats at the value they bear at Paris, (that is 5, 6, 7, or even 8000 livres for a Louis d'or, which was only valued at twenty-four livres under the old government) or pay in ſpecie, and keep the uſeleſs aſſignats till the creation of French credit.

The Dutch, however, have hitherto ſuffered leſs than the other conquered countries; if therefore, at the general peace, they ſhall become emancipated, from their character and from their

their ſituation they will ſlowly, but certainly, recover a place in the commercial world. Induſtry and parſimony in this people are natural and habitual, and muſt enable them ſooner than any European nation, to collect the funds upon which to re-commence, what they chiefly depended upon, their navigation; and by it, to ſupply not only their own wants, but to become again the pedlars and carriers, to ſupply the increaſed wants of the other nations of Europe.* Their ſituation relatively to Flanders, Germany and Britain, will again excluſively give them opportunities of bringing the produce of the two former countries, to be exchanged for that of the latter. If thus they again become a centre of exchanges, their credit will revive in proportion to the extent of them, though both will obviouſly depend upon the reſtoration of the

* During the preſent war the Americans have got poſſeſſion of a part of the carrying trade, but the diſtance of America from Europe muſt reſtore ſome ſhare of it to the Dutch; and the various natural produce of America muſt (putting the probability of revolutions in that country out of view) lead them to higher mercantile concerns than the moderate profits from freight, with which the Dutch, for ages, have been contented.

Stadt-

Stadtholderſhip, or on the kind of government which they eſtabliſh.

The Dutch beſides, have made large loans, both to foreign ſovereigns, to proprietors of land and to commercial houſes, and have veſted large ſums in the funds of every country of Europe: this wealth muſt remain to them as a ſtock, at a general peace, and as the intereſts upon ſuch loans will be chiefly paid in goods, the Dutch have a means of renewing their commerce more certain than any other nation poſſeſſes. A portion of theſe loans are in the Imperial dominions, and in thoſe of Pruſſia, which will have an effect upon the German trade; their loans and ſtock in Sweden and Denmark, will, at leaſt, bring them back their moderate ſhare of the Eaſt Sea trade; while their money in the Britiſh funds muſt contribute to the re-eſtabliſhment of their trade with this country.

—Flanders, from the fertility of the ſoil and the ſecondary traffic which it carried on, partly with France, but chiefly with Holland and England, will, from its political relation to Germany, and from its commercial relations to Britain and to Holland, gradually regain its former level, though this reſtoration will depend upon its barrier being

being reſtored, and upon the commercial regulations which may, more or leſs, facilitate its exchanges. Its commercial intercourſe with France, muſt, from recent oppreſſions, and from the impaired arts and manufactures of that country, be ſlowly re-eſtabliſhed, and conſiſt, for a time, rather in ſimple barter than in merchandize proceeding upon credit.

—The frontier of Germany, from Alſace to the Auſtrian Netherlands, has experienced ſo great a degree of deſolation, that it can, for a long time, but feebly contribute, by its natural or manufactured produce, even its former proportion to the Flemiſh and Dutch markets. All the rich provinces on the banks of the Rhine, from Mayence to Cologne, and all the rich towns on the French ſide of the Rhine, and ſeveral on the German ſide, have, by contributions and by pillage, loſt their wealth, and with it the funds which fed their arts and manufactures; of courſe, their liberation from French thraldom muſt leave them in an impoveriſhed ſtate, open indeed to ſupplies from the interior of Germany, but little able to contribute, of themſelves, returns for thoſe ſupplies, and leſs able to pay for the ſupply of their wants to Holland and Flanders, conveying to them the manu-

manufactured produce, or foreign merchandize of Britain.

—France, from its exhauſted ſtate, from the annihilation of its arts, manufactures and commerce, and from its narrowed means of reviving its navigation, can only take its place in the commercial world, in the proportion that its natural produce ſhall enable it, ſince its manufactures and funds for trade will be to create, before its exchanges can be aided by credit, or that credit regain its former commercial weight with European or diſtant nations.

2. The nations which have eſcaped deſolation from the war, muſt, from their reſources and credit, recover their former commercial level, and have a balance of trade, in their favor, without rivalty in exchanges or in credit by France, or the countries deſolated by its arms.

—Great Britain will neceſſarily take the firſt place among the nations of this deſcription, ſince the expences of the war, however great, have neither impaired its commerce, nor its national credit. In fact, the commercial evils, which have ſurrounded it, have neither checked its arts and manu-

manufactures, nor materially obſtructed its trade. As its exchanges muſt be greater, in the degree that Holland, Flanders, Germany, and even France ſhall require its produce and its foreign merchandize; and, as its funds are equal to theſe ſupplies, and its credit unrivalled, it not only muſt retain the markets of Europe, but almoſt excluſively poſſeſs them; while its naval power, even ſuppoſing the *uti poſſidetis* in the Weſt and Eaſt-Indies to take place, will, for many years, give it the balance of trade.

—The German ſtates, which have, in like manner, had their countries exempted from the deſolations of the war, will neceſſarily recover their former level, for if Auſtria, which takes the lead in them, has incurred a debt to Britain, that proportion of the intereſt, to be paid to Britiſh ſubjects, will, like the intereſt on the Dutch loans, become the means of giving to Britain a ſhare of the depôt trade, and of courſe cement the commercial with the political relation of the two countries.

—Pruſſia, from poſſeſſing Thorn, and of courſe controlling the trade of Dantzig, and from its port of Memmel, muſt continue to ſend thoſe bulky

commodities to Britain, which have given employment to ſo large a ſhare of our tonnage and ſeamen. From theſe ports Pruſſia will regain its former level, while that portion of its dependencies, which is ſituated in the duchy of Cleves and in High Guelderland, will return to their former commercial intercourſe with Holland and Flanders.

—Spain, from its eſtabliſhed intercourſe with England, will, in a commercial view, neceſſarily return to its level, and as many of the European productions, which it ſent to South America, were drawn from the countries, the manufactures of which have been ruined by the war, it probably will derive its chief ſupplies from Britain.

—The ſtates of Italy, which have been exhauſted or overawed by the French, during the war, will, if Great Britain retain its ſuperiority in the Mediterranean, neceſſarily reſort to the market, where their commodities will find a ſale, where their wants can be ſupplied, and where credit alone can be given.

—Ruſſia, from its commercial relation to Britain, will of courſe meet the Britiſh uniform demand, as well as open profitable markets to the

the country, which alone is able to keep up an intercourſe with it.

—Sweden and Denmark, which have contributed, by their neutrality, to the fatal devaſtations of France, muſt return to their former ſecondary commercial tranſactions.

It remains only to offer conjectures reſpecting the probable commercial conſequences, ſuppoſing, in the preſent ſtate of affairs in Europe, a general peace to take place.

The revolution in France having not only changed the political and commercial character of that nation, but ſubverted thoſe of the countries deſolated by its arms, and the effects of this event having conſiderably unhinged the political and commercial relations, both of the nations which ſtill oppoſe the progreſs of France; of thoſe which have receded from the confederacy, and of thoſe which, by a ſyſtem of neutrality, have contributed to the diſtreſs of every power with whom they were in political and commercial alliance, we muſt, in reaſoning from the balance of power to that of trade, advert to what would be commer-

cially ſafe or permanent, and begin with the circumſtances, under which the contracting powers may be placed.

It muſt be obvious, that the preſent circumſtances of France are ſuch, from the fall of its arts, its manufactures, its commerce, and its navigation, that it can offer but a very precarious tenure, for any political relations which may be formed with it, and a ſtill more precarious tenure for any commercial relations which may be attempted, between its merchants and thoſe of foreign countries, or any ſtipulations in a commercial treaty founded upon theſe relations.

We can therefore conjecture only reſpecting the commercial relations, which may be attempted between France and the Powers now at war with it, between it and the Powers who have acknowledged the Republic, and between it and the Powers whoſe neutrality recognized the French revolution.

—Britain, under the firſt of theſe deſcriptions, upon any ſuppoſition, except that of the reſtoration of the Monarchy, cannot revert to the ſtipulations in the treaty of commerce, 1787. Any treaty of commerce, which we can form with the French Directory, muſt proceed wholly upon that com-

commercial intercourſe which may take place, between the merchants of the two countries. This intercourſe can, at firſt, conſiſt only of ſomething like ſimple barter, for commercial ſpeculation cannot be ſuppoſed ſo extravagant, as to induce the merchants and manufacturers of Britain to lend their credit, to any extent, to merchants in France, becauſe all the old French traders are annihilated, and the probity of the new dealers, is a thing to be created, and in its progreſs muſt be held as liable to new revolutionary calamities.

—Germany, as a commercial country, in ſo far as it has not been deſolated by the French, either muſt continue its trade by the Elbe, from Hamburg, &c. or it muſt, if the Netherlands revert to its old maſters, ſend its goods by the Rhine, through Holland, under the circumſtances already deſcribed.

—Ruſſia, having during the war continued its commercial connexions with Britain, and having even before the war, but ſecondary commercial tranſactions with France, will be under ſimilar difficulties with Britain, in eſtabliſhing even its former intercourſe with the French merchants,

chants, or in founding upon it, a commercial alliance.

Of the commercial Powers who have acknowledged the Republic, Spain is the moſt conſiderable. As aMonarchy, Spain can have little political confidence in the faith of its republican neighbours. Though the Spaniſh government may ſeem to conform to the ſtipulations in the treaty, it muſt dread the conſequences of re-admitting French adventurers among its ſubjects; the Spaniſh merchant however will be under no ſuch preſſure, in declining exchanges, on credit, with the French merchant, more particularly when he conſiders, that they can be more ſafely made with England, enabling him by its credit to furniſh the articles required by government, for the ſupply of South America.

—The portion of commerce furniſhed by Pruſſia, coming chiefly from Dantzig, will be under the ſame caution, with reſpect to the French merchant, by which the neutral Powers have been directed.

The neutral powers of Sweden and Denmark, and the States of America, have indeed, during the war, ſupplied the French with their produce,

duce, but without giving them that credit, which can render tranſactions ſolid or permanent. At firſt the produce of theſe countries was carried to France, to be exchanged for French produce and for ſpecie, but ſo little faith have theſe neutral nations had, either in the Republic, or in the French merchant, that the money has of late been remitted, before the foreign merchant would run the riſk of putting a cargo, at the immoral diſcretion of the Committee of Public Safety. It is farther remarkable, that while theſe neutral nations ſupplied the French, neither as ſtates nor as merchants have they received, in payment, the paper currency of the Republic, whoſe ſovereignty they recogniſed, both by ſending and receiving ambaſſadors.

From theſe commercial circumſtances, under which other nations are placed relatively to France, it appears ;—That trade cannot be conſidered as placed upon a ſafe baſis, in ſo far as regards France, until the political ſituation of that country ſhall be ſuch, as to afford ſecurity to the property of its own ſubjects, and its laws ſuch, as to compel payments to foreigners, entruſting the French merchant with their property. Hence,

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its intercourſe with other nations, will not ſo much depend on any form which its government may ſuddenly aſſume, as upon the practice under that government, which may gain to its merchants the confidence of foreigners. It does not then appear, either if the preſent Directory be the Sovereigns who are to be the tranſacting parties in a peace with the Belligerent Powers, or the guarantee of the treaties made with the powers who have receded from the war, or even with the neutral powers, that the ſafety, which is the firſt conſtituent of commercial intercourſe, can be ſoon or eaſily obtained from France.

From a like reference to the circumſtances, under which other nations are placed, relatively to France, it is obvious, that trade with that country cannot be conſidered as permanent, till the internal government ſhall be of that deſcription, and the exchanges attended with that probity, upon which credit (the ſpirit of trade) can be eſtabliſhed.—'Till this event happen, no commercial commiſſions of any importance can either be given or received, and till they

they can, trade cannot be held as reſting upon a permanent baſis, becauſe till then, commerce can neither become one of the reſources of France, nor commercial tranſactions be deemed, as exempted from interruption and public fraud.

From the probable commercial circumſtances in which France, and other nations in Europe may be placed, ſuppoſing peace, in the preſent ſtate of affairs, to take place, we may offer conjectures, reſpecting the political connexions between the European Powers, and the degree in which they would lead to exchanges, that would be more or leſs commercially ſafe or permanent.

A firſt conjecture ſeems to be, that if France ſhall revert to a Monarchy, its political relations will naturally be formed with Spain, Sardinia, and the Italian ſtates. In this caſe, the danger to the tranquillity of Europe, and therefore to commerce, from the exhauſted ſtate of France itſelf, and of the Powers allied to it, muſt be leſs than before the fall of the Monarchy.

—Britain in this event, would revert to its connexion with Holland and Auſtrian Flanders, upon the baſis of the treaties of commerce, founded upon that of Utrecht, and of courſe would be the ally of Auſtria, while from oppoſition to this power, and from its entanglements with the French Republic, Pruſſia might throw its political weight into the ſcale of France, but the portion of its territory which borders on the Netherlands, muſt be commercially connected with the Dutch.

—The commercial intercourſe of America with France muſt be partial, compared to what muſt take place between it and Britain, from the credit of the former being annihilated, and that of the latter entire.

The commercial balance, from the whole of theſe circumſtances, will reſt in Britain, becauſe a centre of credit, and therefore of exchange, more ſafe and permanent than could, for many years, be found in Europe, and becauſe, ſuppoſing it to retain but a portion of its acquiſitions, in the Weſt and Eaſt Indies, it could beſt afford the commodities, for which the European nations would exchange their produce.

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A ſecond conjecture ſeems to be, that if either a new Dynaſty, or the preſent Directory be eſtabliſhed in France, its political relations could not be ſuppoſed to proceed, but in one of two lines; either the nations bordering upon it, Spain, Italy, and the German Princes, on the French ſide of the Rhine, from impreſſions of danger, and Pruſſia from jealouſy of Auſtria, would form its allies; or, theſe countries, experiencing revolutions, might become from intereſt, its confederates, to enable them, combinedly, to oppoſe Britain, Auſtria, and Ruſſia, defending themſelves from the effects of a general convulſion. Upon ſuch a ſuppoſition, even more ſtrongly than in the preceding caſe, the balance of the remaining trade in Europe, in every view of ſafety or permanency, would reſt in Britain, accompanied with the circumſtances, with which the preceding conjecture was illuſtrated.

A third conjecture ſeems to be, that if under any poſſible form of government, France ſhall be hemmed in within its ancient limits, the ſafety and permanency of the European trade, particularly that of Great Britain, will depend upon the arrangements made, at a general peace, of the foreign poſſeſſions of the European Maritime Powers.

—Should France retain its Weſt India poſſeſſions, and the Spaniſh part of St. Domingo, judging from the avarice and ambition of its republican rulers, and from the eaſy attack which they could make on Spain, they would probably interrupt commerce by new ſchemes of conqueſt in South America.

—If the poſſeſſions of France in the Eaſt Indies, ſhould be reſtored, it would have a double temptation to re-commence hoſtilities with Britain, viz. that of cutting off from us our Indian poſſeſſions, and that of preventing us from aſſiſting Spain, in protecting its South American dominions.

—If Holland have either a part, or the whole of its poſſeſſions reſtored to it, and yet remain under its preſent uſurpers, France would neceſſarily draw the Dutch into its ſchemes on the Weſt and Eaſt Indies. In this caſe, the war would become maritime, and the parties be, France and Holland, and Britain and Spain.

—If Flanders be reſtored to Auſtria, the Emperor would become a party, and the ally of Britain, the ſafety and permanency of whoſe trade in the Narrow Seas, can never admit of the annexation of Flanders to France.

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Under any of theſe ſuppoſitions, the balance of exchange might vibrate between Britain and Holland, but that of trade, proceeding on credit, would reſt in Britain, whether we conſider it, in its relations to the European Powers, or, in the relation it has to the Weſt and Eaſt Indies.

SKETCH

Shewing the Ports of the Netherlands, from which France *may attack* BRITAIN *and distress its Trade.*

NB. Ports for Ships of War distinguished by ▭